جوردان تايمز يومية سيأسِّيَّة تصدر بالإنجائزية عن للؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية ،الراي،

Syrian Jews coming back from U.S.

DAMASCUS (AFP) - More than 100 Syrian Jews have returned after being allowed to travel and spending more than a year in the United States, the head of the Jewish community said Monday. He also told AFP that almost a third of Syrian Jews, or about 1,250 out of 4,000, had opted to stay on in Syria since Damascus agreed in 1992 to allow applicants for exit visas to leave with their families. "We can get passports valid for six years and a multi-exit visa for one year without a bank guarantee for our return," said Rabbi Ibrahim Hamra. Around 110 Syrian Jews have returned from the United States, he said. The Rabbi explained that travellers faced language and work problems, adding that most of the Jews who left did not sell off their assets "in gold, silver, leather, ready-made clothing and handicraft trades. A Jewish bourique owner in Damascus, Yussef Jajati, said he had no plans to leave the country. "We have prosperity here that we cannot find elsewhere," he explained.

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Regent meets expatriate leader

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AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad Ben Talal, the Regent, Monday received at Al Manal Palace the president of the Jordanian Expatriates Society in Australia, Samir Al Abbasi. Mr. Abbasi conveyed to Prince Mohammad the greetings of the Jordanian community in Australia and their appreciation of His Majesty King Hus-sein's efforts to maintain their links to their homeland and his concern for their problems. The meeting was attended by Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi.

Majali visits Isra'a Wal Mi'raj exhibition

AMMAN (Petra) - Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Monday visited a exhibition held by the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs at the King Abdullah Mosque in Amman to mark Al Isra'a Wal Mi'raj. The exhibition highlights the keenness of the Hashemite family on preserving and renovating the burial sites of the Prophet Mohammad's companions in all parts of Jordan. The prime minister was briefed by Awgaf and Islamic Affairs Minister Abdul Salam Al Abbadi on the achievements of the ministry in Jordan and the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

U.S. commerce secretary due here

AMMAN (Petra) — American Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown will arrive in Amman next Monday on a short visit to Jordan. The American official will meet with the ministers of planning, finance and industry and trade for talks on bilateral relations in economic and com-

Spanish official arrives today

AMMAN (Petra) — Under-Secretary of the Spanish Foreign Ministry Francisco Villiar is due in Amman Tuesday on a two-day official visit to Jordan. Mr. Villiar will hold talks with Prime Minister Abdul Salam Maiali, Lower House of Parliament Speaker Taher Al Masn and senior Jordanian officials on bilateral relations.

Gaza grenade hurts Israeli troops

OCCUPIED GAZA (R) -Two Israeli soldiers were wounded on Monday when a grenade was thrown at a camera crew filming the occupied Gaza Strip for the army ahead of a planned troop pullout, state radio said. An army spokesman confirmed that a soldier and paramilitary border policeman accompanying a TV crew were lightly wounded by a fragmentation grenade in the Khan Younis refugee camp. He said the members of the camera crew were unhurt, but declined to give further details. The radio said the TV crew was working for the army documenting events in the strip before the delayed army pulout, which was to have begun four weeks ago.

Tunis names March 20 as election day

TUNIS (R) — The Tunisian government Monday formally set presidential and parliamentary elections for March 20. President Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali signed decrees fixing the date and the rules for the campaign, an official statement said. Officials had already said the elections would be held on March 20 and all seven recognised parties have said they would run in the parliamentary poli.

Rifkind in Riyadh

RIYADH (AFP) — British Defence Secretary Malcolm Rifkind arrived here Monday for talks on the fate of multibillion dollar defence contracts in the light of Saudi Arabia's financial difficulties. Mr. Rifkind was to have talks with his Saudi counterpart, Prince Sultan Ben Abdul Aziz, on "bilateral defence cooperation," a British diplomatic source said.

Jordan hopes peace talks lead to independent Palestinian state

Economic accord with PLO sets out clear-cut definition of relationship — Majali

By Nermeen Murad Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — In the most forthcoming statement todate since the signing of the Oslo accord, the prime minister yesterday said Jordan would like to see the emergence of an independent Palestinian state as the final outcome of negotiations between Israel and the PLO.

"We hope that the talks would lead to the creation of an independent Palestinian state," Dr. Abdul Salam Majali told a group of journalists and diplomats who met with him in his office yesterday.

Palestinians had accused Jordan that it did not want the creation of an independent state as the reason for the delay in signing a draft economic agreement that was to lay detailed plans for economic cooperation between Jordan and the envisaged Palestinian authority for autonomy in the occupied territories.

Despite repeated assurances by His Majesty King Hussein that Jordan had no political designs over the West Bank and it stands committed to its 1988 decision to sever legal and administrative ties with the Israeli-occupied territories, the PLO did not sign the agree-

many Arab and foreign countries had consistently express-ed hope that the Middle East

ment.

peace negotiations would achieve "Palestinian aspirations," but they stopped short of endorsing a Palestinian state as the final outcome of the talks. The prime minister's statement yesterday was thus seen as the first statement by a high-ranking Jordanian official as specifically speaking of an independent state since the PLO secretly negotiated with Israel in Oslo leading to the signing of the declaration of principles in Washington.

Jordanian observers believe that the statement by the premier was especially significant because it was timed only days after Jordan and the PLO signed an economic accord after repeated delays apparently because the PLO wanted to ensure that the accord preserved the integrity of its independent authority and provided for symbols of sovereignty over the Israeli-occupied territories.

The statement, according to observers, seemed to top a series of measures and moves that Jordan had undertaken to underline that it had no political ambitions over the West Bank and was still committed to its long-held policies of supporting Palestinian rights to self-determination and state-

analysts, had sought to soothe Palestinian fears about the Kingdom being not committed



Abdul Salam Majali

to supporting the PLO in its quest for the creation of an independent Palestinian state. Dr. Majali told the "Mon-

day circle" group that after the signing of the agreement between Jordan and the PLO he felt confident that both parties could continue their negotiations with Israel with a clearcut definition of their relationship. He said that the Jordan-PLO

accord is not supposed to be judged by what it might give either side but by what should be seen as a normal progression of partnership which will give the PLO a "better bargaining position in their negotiations with Israel."

He appeared to be referring to criticism that the agreement fell far short of Jordanian expectations and provided for major concessions to the PLO from Jordan.

Underlining that the newly signed agreement provided a framework of cooperation which should have been in place "two years ago," Dr. Majali said that now the "PLO can continue negotiations with Israel while it has clear-cut and defined relations with Jordan."

The prime minister also expressed optimism about major progress being made in the Syrian-Israeli track of negotiations saying that he expected "something serious" to come out of the meeting between Syrian President Hafez Al Assad and U.S. President Bill Clinton scheduled for Jan. 16 Geneva.

He said Jordan would consider the success of the Syrian-Israeli negotiations a success for the Kingdom including any further success on the Palestinian-Israeli track of talks.

"We consider any success on any track to be a success for said Dr. Majali in the question and answer meeting at the Prime Ministry. He added that the progress in the Palestinian track and the expected progress in talks between Israel and Syria all fall within Jordan's hopes for com-

He said that a possible

(Continued on page 10)



delegation, and his Palestinian counterpart Nabil Shaath shake hands Monday prior to the begin-

Israel, PLO may not meet April 13 deadline —Beilin

Autonomy negotiations resume in Taba

TABA, Egypt (Agencies) — Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) may not meet an April 13 deadline for the full withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho, a senior Israeli official said Monday.

His remarks came as Israeli and Palestinian negotiators reconvened in the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Taba after a three-week breach brought on. by differences, principally over

Palestinian chief delegate Nabil Shaath was more optimistic, saying agreement could be reached in three weeks.

We have to finish as soon as possible and we are ready, he told reporters. "I know exactly what difficulties are and I know they are solveable.

Dr. Shaath insisted that the April 13th deadline envisaged when the accord was signed in September be met.

The way it looks now, we won't" meet that date because of the stops and starts in the negotiations, Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin told

It would be the second dateline the negotiators missed in the Israel-PLO agreement on the first stages of Palestinian self-rule. The Israelis were scheduled to begin their withdrawai on Dec. 13, but balked over unresolved security

"There are many topics, many details on the schedule, curity, defending the settlements in Gaza, details that we haven't even touched yet, Mr. Beilin said.

Israeli officials now argue April 13 is not a deadline since the Oslo agreement does not monitor it specifically. The accord says withdrawal should be completed four months after the terms are agreed upon.

The Israeli delegation, led by General Amnon Shahak, entered the resort hotel here

without talking to reporters. Dr. Shaath accused Israel of lacking goodwill and hit out at

Sarid who said Sunday that he expected the negotiations to last two months.

"It is sad when publicly you say it will take two months. It is violating the agreement, Dr. Shaath said.

Environment Minister Yossi

Israel Foreign Minister Shimon Peres warned there were no target dates. "We will take four months after the signing of the agreement," to complete the withdrawal, Mr. Peres told Israel Radio.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin told Israel Radio: "Don't expect a breakthrough in Taba in the coming days."

He stressed there were "no sacred dates" in the autonomy deal and that the essential thing was to secure a firm and detailed accord in implementing self-rule.

Israeli delegation spokesman Colonel Ami Gluska was also on a different wavelength to the PLO team in Taba. "I think Mr. Shaath's

(Continued on page 4)

Settlers block bridge traffic

KING HUSSEIN BRIDGE. occupied West Bank (Agencies) - Herb grower Eitan Rahimpur, along with a few dozen fellow Jewish settlers, blocked traffic at this crossing for an hour Monday to protest the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) talks on Palestinian autonomy.

"We are not budging from here," Mr. Rahimpur and his friends chanted, Israeli flags fluttering over their heads, as four Palestinian buses headed for Jordan waited by the road-

But moments later, after the TV cameras stopped rolling. Mr. Rahimpur sounded much less sure about his future in Naama, a communal farm just four kilometres north of Jericho, the future seat of Palestinian administration.

"There isn't much hope, and we know this," Mr. Rahimpur said of the autonomy talks that resumed Monday in the Egyptian resort of Taba. "In the end, there won't be a choice, and we'll leave."

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin does not want to dismantle any of the 144 settlements now. He wants to avoid setting precedents that would weaken Israeli bargaining positions once negotiations on the final status of the occupied territories begin in mid-1996. When Mr. Rabin visited

Naama last week, accompanied by army brass and peace negotiators, he told the settlers in the crowded clubhouse that he wanted them to stay put. But he acknowledged they had "justification to be worried" and did not make any promises that they could stay beyond the next five years.

In Monday's protest, the settlers' confusion and tension were evident. When soldiers tried to block their path, one demonstrator yelled, "stop autonomy, not us."



A Jewish settler waving Israeli flags Monday stops a bus transporting Palestinians across the

River Jordan via the King Hussein Bridge (AFP

Syria, Egypt and GCC call Israel-PLO accord a first step

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — The foreign ministers of Syria, Egypt and six oil-rich Gulf states stressed Monday that the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace accord should be followed by similar moves on the other Middle east peace tracks.

"The ministers have reviewed the peace process in the Middle East and its developments since the signing of the PLO-Israel declaration of principles, being a first step that should be completed by similar steps on the other tracks for achieving just and comprehensive peace in the region," the statement said.

Syria has been critical till now of the Israeli-PLO deal. It said the ministers, during two days of deliberations. underscored the importance of Sunday's planned summit meeting in Geneva between residents Hafez Al Assad and Bill Clinton and voiced their countries" strong support for

the Syrian leader. They also expressed their hope that the Geneva summit would bring about a compre-hensive Middle East peace based on U.N. Security Council resolutions, including a full Israeli withdrawal from occupied Arab lands. The eight states meeting

here were signatories of the March 6, 1991 Damascus declaration, which was billed as a collective security pact under which tens of thousands of Syrian and Egyptian troops would have formed the core of a force to defend the Gulf countries.

The alliance was designed to prevent a repetition of a disaster such as the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, but its military component was never put into effect and the pact now serves mainly as a forum for political and economic coordination.

The final statement issued after the meeting here made only a passing reference to the Damascus Declaration. It said the ministers expressed satisfaction over the implementation of recommendations made at their June meeting in Abu Dhabi calling for reactivating

political and economic coordination.

Sources close to the two-day meeting said disagreements be-tween the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman and the United Arab Emirates - stood in the way of military cooperation.

However, Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa said the views of the eight "coincided on key issues and there were no major disagree-

On Sunday, Mr. Sharaa said security matters would be raised among the signatories on a bilateral basis. The final statement on Mon-

day said only that the ministers agreed to "give a new boost to political and economic cooperation in accordance with the Damascus declaration princi-

The oil-rich Gulf states have not provided the \$10 billion in

(Continued on page 4)

NATO formally invites former foes to join as limited partners

BRUSSELS (Agencies) — U.S. President Bill Clinton and other North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) leaders Monday formally invited their former Warsaw Pact rivals to become limited partners in the Western military alliance.
But worries about Russian

nationalism and frustration over Bosnia clouded the first day of the NATO summit.

"The door is open," declared British Prime Minister John Major, saying the action clearly could lead to the admission of new members to NATO, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl said it was a "serious step on the way" to increasing the size of the alliance.

At a ceremony marking a turning point for the 44-yearold alliance, the leaders signed a U.S. "Partnership for Peace" plan that will draw the East European nations closer — but without granting them full membership.

In the partnership invitation, the leaders said: "Active participation in the partnership for peace will play an important role in the evolutionary process of the expansion of NATO.

The leaders said they wanted to strengthen ties with the democratic states to our east." The alliance, they said, "remains open to the membership of other European states in a position ... to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic

"Today, we are marking a historic initiative of our alliance," said NATO Secretary-General Manfred Woerner as he asked the leaders to sign two documents, one in English

and one in French. Aides circulated the blue folders among the allied around the table and they signed in alphabetical order. Mr. Clinton was the last to sign. He made no remarks.

Mr. Woerner wound up the brief ceremony by saying. "Thank you very much. It's The summit was set to adopt

a general statement affirming the leaders "expect and would welcome NATO expansion" eastward but without providing a list of possible candidates or fixing a timetable. NATO officials have stressed the need to go slow on enlargement for fear of isolat-

which is fiercely opposed to its one-time Warsaw pact allies joining the Atlantic alliance. The partnership scheme was not likely to satisfy countries such as Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic which are eager to climb under NATO's

ing and antagonising Russia.

security umbrella in the face of rising nationalism in Russia. All reluctantly agreed to the cooperation programme as a first step. Czech President Vaclav Havel urged the alliance Sunday to switch to "a higher gear, show more courage and generosity" on the membership question.

In Warsaw. Polish President Lech Walesa urged NATO to start imposing conditions on Russia to test its credibility as a future participant in the plan.

On Bosnia, Mr. Clinton told the allies. "We have to mean it" if the alliance threatens military action to end Serb attacks in the war-torn region.

Clinton announces nuclear breakthrough

BRUSSELS (AP) -- President Bill Clinton announced Monday that Ukraine will sign an agreement Friday with the United States and Russia to eliminate all nuclear weapons from its soil. "This is a hopeful and histor-

ic breakthrough," Mr. Clinton said at a news conference in Brussles. "This trilateral agreement

we will sign will lead to the complete removal of nuclear weapons from Ukraine," Mr.

The president announced that he would fly to the Ukrainian capital of Kiev for a brief visit with Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk before be meets with Mr. Kravchuk and Russian President Boris Yeltsin for the signing ceremonies in Moscow.

The accord will dismantle the third-largest nuclear arsenal in the world - more than 1,000 warheads - and marks a major advance in the president's drive to reverse the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

It was concluded after long and difficult negotiations involving the United States, Ukraine and Russia.

Ukraine had hesitated to surrender the weapons, a residue of Soviet power, while Russia retains a sizeable arsen-

British aid worker kidnapped in Somalia

MOGADISHU (Agencies) — Unidentified Somalis abducted a British U.N. aid worker as he walked to his office Monday, the latest in a string of attacks on humanitarian agencies.

.The U.N. World Food Programme (WFP) employee, pending notification of the family, was dragged into a sedan that had been parked near the WFP office in Mogadishu, agency officials said.

.But in a broadcast Monday monitored in London, the BBC identified the abducted worker as Calum Gardar.

There was no official word of a ransom demand or other contact with the abductors. "We're in the dark," said one WFP employee who did not give his name. U.N. officials were conduc-

tint their own investigation as well as coordinating with the nascent Somali police in an effort to find the kidnapped employee.
"We are in the process of

gathering information now," said Adishwr Padarath, the acting U.N. civilian spokesman.

U.S. and U.N. military officials have received sporadic intelligence reports over the last two months indicating that American or other U.N. employees could be the target of kidnap attempts.

The aid agencies have been hit with a rash of other attacks in recent weeks as the United Nations has contemplated whether to maintain a large military force in Somalia to suppress clan-based violence and general banditry as the country attempts to build a

working government. The United States is gradually withdrawing its remaining 5,500 ground troops from the country in keeping with President Bill Clinton's prom-

March 31. The military expects a Marine amphibious force to remain off Mogadishu shores for some time after the dead-

The recent attacks on aid agencies appear to have a mix up of motives, from religious extremism to banditry to per-sonal vendettas by disaffected Somali former employees. But they all illustrate the general instability in Somalia despite the lull in inter-clan warfare.

The U.N. Development

Programme (UNDP) and U.N. High Commissioner for Rerugees (UNHCR) temporarily evacuated their Mogadishu offices a week ago after an unidentified attacker apparently a former employee of the building's owner threw a homemade bomb onto

A few days earlier, gunmen attacked the WFP compound in the southern city of Baidoa, killing a somali guard and gravely wounding a Somali driver. WFP Country Director Gemmo Lodesani said the attack appeared to be an effort

to steal an agency vehicle.

Mr. Lodesani had already closed the WFP office in Bar-

On Christmas Eve. two Somalis were injured when hand grenades were thrown into the Baidoa offices of Catholic Relief Services and the Irish aid group Goal Ire-

U.N. military officials fear the grenade attack was carried out by extremists as a protest against the celebration of Christmas in Somalia. Just before the attack, an anonymous group claimiong to represent Muslim fundamentalists warned that is would kill anyone attempting to spread Christianity in Somalia.

Algerian accuses French police of power abuse

PARIS (Agencies) — A man charged with having links to armed Algerian extremists accused French police Sunday of abusing their powers and planting allegedly discriminating documents in his house.

Moussa Kraouche, 34, presihood in France (FAF), which has close ties to Algeria's banned militant Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), was detained in a swoop early in November. In an interview with the Sun-

day paper Journal du Dimanche he said: "I accuse the police of abusing their powers, of manipulation, of having fabricated false evidence against me by slipping three pieces of paper into my briefcase that I had never seen before and which do not belong to me."

Police said Friday they found incriminated documents, including copies of a claim from another movement, the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), that it had kidnapped two French aid workers.

Investigators also said they discovered a letter given to Michele Thevenot, one of three staff in France's Algiers embassy taken hostage in October, by her captors.

Interior Minister Charles Pasqua ordered police to investigate the origin of the papers found in a raid on Mr. Kraouche's home in Taverny, just north of Paris.

A ministry statement Friday said Mr. Kraouche "admitted several times in official staements that these documents had indeed been found in his home and had given detailed accounts of how he obtained them" — a report strongly denied by Mr. Kraouche Sun-

day.
Mr. Kraouche's defence lawyer Jacoues Verges has criticised "excesses by some sectors of the police," alleging similarities with a case of trumped-up charges against alleged Irish extremists de-

icar Paris in the lybus Mr. Verges said Friday on French television magistrate handling the Kraouche case, hs ordered a thorough reexamination of papers found in the raid to determine their origin, judicial officials said.

Mr. Kraouche was detained on Nov. 13 for associating with criminals involved in "terrorist" activities and freed on

police bail on Dec. 2. In Algiers, two militants were killed in a shootout during an attack on a police sta-

tion in Algiers, a newspaper reported on Sunday. Two passers-by were wounded in the Saturday night shootout in the hilly Beaucheraye

Liberte said. It said three of the attackers had escaped.

At least 1,800 people have been killed in political violence since the Algerian authorities in January 1992 cancelled the country's first multi-party general election which the FIS was poised to win.

On Sunday three employees of Radio Algeria were wounded, one seriously, when gunmen opened fire on the vehicle in which they were travelling in the capital's district of Baraki. the official news agency APs

reported. Eight Algerian journalists were killed last year, one of them in Baraki, in armed attacks blamed on Islamic fundamentalists.



Iraq tells its people tough times to end soon

BAGHDAD (R) - Iraq is telling its sanctions-hit citizens the worst is over nearly three years after the Gulf war over Kuwait but they need a little more patience to have the "walls of the embargo" shat-

Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein told his people in a new year message last month that the worst was over and victory was round the corner.

"O Iraqi people: The most difficult parts are over, and there only remains one round, which you are qualified to complete," he said in the signed message.

Iraq's government and media give the impression that the stringent U.N. trade sanctions imposed on Iraq for invading Kuwait in 1990 will 1994.

Iraqi Airways is preparing Saddam International Airport in hope of getting back its fleet of civil planes, standing in neighbouring countries for more than three years.

Iraq's ports authority is repairing damaged ships and docks at the head of the Gulf. Cargo ships carrying sugar and rice have already anchored at the Umm Qasr.
The arrival of the first ship in

November was turned into a national occasion with fireworks and gunfire erupting spontaneously over Baghdad

The government newspaper Al Jumhouriyah warned Arab states still hostile to Iraq to seek peace with Baghdad before it was too late. "They have to realise now,

before it is too late, that the embargo will officially collapse in the near future," the paper said in a front-page editorial. Iraq is banking on recent

conciliatory moves towards implementing U.N. demands on arms control and monitoring. In December it allowed II N. helicopters to fly over Baghdad for the first time without objec-

Baghdad also agreed to

evacuate its citizens who happened to be on the Kuwaiti side of the border pushed further north by a U.N. demarcation commission.

Baghdad also intends to send a high-level delegation to New York by mid-January, Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz may lead the New York

Iraq's aim behind such moves is to implement paragraph 22 of the major Gulf war ceasefire resolution, 687, which allows free oil exports when the Security Council is satisfied with Baghdad's per-formance on weapons annihila-

Western diplomats here believe that Baghdad will continue with its conciliatory signals and refrain from openly defving the U.S. administra-

tion of President Bill Clinton. "The U.S. wants a proven track (record) of compliance over a sustained period. I believe that is exactly what Baghdad will do," a Western diplo-

But Baghdad may not be ready to go the extra mile and accept all American conditions for the lifting or easing of the oil embargo. "Recognition of the new borders of Kuwait may not be

a big problem, but the thorniest issue is human rights," another diplomat said. The U.S. is lobbying to link

sanctions with the cessation of what it calls Iraqi government persecution of Kurds in the north and Shi'ites in the south. The United States, Britain, France and Russia protested to Iraq on Wednesday over what

they called widespread human rights violations, indiscriminate shellings of civilians and arbitrary killings. Baghdad says the Kurds are now under Western protection and running their own affairs

away from its authority. In the south, it said, it is fighting infiltrators, who are being armed and trained by Iran for hit and run operations on civilian targets in the area.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iranian delegation heads for Germany

TEHRAN (AFP) — A high-level Iranian delegation left here Monday for Germany amid shaky relations between the two-countries, diplomats in Tehran said. The delegation, headed by National Security Council Secretary Mohammad Javad Larijani, is to discuss ways to boost cooperation with Germany. Iran's main economic partner. Mr. Larijani, who is also deputy-head of the parliament's foreign affairs sub-committee. said earlier that the delegation would seek to "improve understanding and friendship" between the two countries Last October, an Iranian and four Lebanese went on trial in Berlin for the murder of four Kurdish opposition leaders. allegedly ordered by the Tehran authorities. The German federal prosecutor's office has openly accused the Iranian secret service of masterminding the killings. Iran has denied all involvement. Meanwhile. Iran's supreme court has upheld a death sentence against a German technician.

Kurds want sanctions exemption

ERBIL (AFP) - The prime minister of the self-declared Kurdish government in northern Iraq asked British Premier John Major to help exempt Kurdistan from a U.N. embargo against Baghdad, Kurdish sources said Sunday. Kosrat Ressoul sought Mr. Major's cooperation in bringing about a partial lifting of the embargo to help "improve the material situation of our people" in a letter handed to Britain's Lord Archer who was in Kurdistan last week. Lord Archer, better known as the author Jeffrey Archer, addressed the Kurdish regional parliament on Wednesday and delivered a message from Mr. Major, recognising it. Mr. Archer said Britain would contribute through the United Nations, the European Community and directly to the humanitarian aid budget pledged by the international community to the Kurdish autonomous region. The trade embargo was imposed on Iraq after its invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. The northern Iraqi Kurdish autonomous region is affected by the sanctions, being part of the country.

Iran pardons, cut sentences for 2,300

TEHRAN (AFP) - Iranian spiritual guide Ayatollah Ali Khamenci has issued a decree granting either an amnesty or a reduction in sentence to 2.289 prisoners, the Iranian news agency IRNA reported. The agency said the decree, announced Sunday, was in response to a proposal from the head of the judicial system, Mohammad Yazdi, to mark an Islamic religious holiday in Iran.

Judaeo-Christian clergy to meet

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) - Rabbis, Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox church leaders will convene in Jerusalem on Feb. 1 for a conference on the response of religion to the modern world, the organisers announced. The International Jewish-Christian Conference on Religious Leadership in Secular Society will be chaired by Rabbi David Rosen, whio played a major role in moves leading up to the Dec. 30 accord opening diplomatic relations between the Holy See and Israel. Rabbi Rosen said among those due to attend were cardinals Carlo Maria Martini of Milan, Josef Ratzinger, head of the Vatican's congregation of doctrine and faith, Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey and President of the World Council of Churches Anna Marie Agaard. Most of the chief rabbis of Europe would participate. Rabbi Rosen said, as would Orthodox Patriarch Alexius of Russia and the ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople. Discussion topics include genetic engineering, ethnic diversity and the artificial prolonging of life.

Stop China junkets, Peres urges

TEL AVIV (AFP) - Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres has angered his colleagues with a call for a halt of junkets to China. Mr. Peres sent a letter to Prime minister Yitzhak Rabi asking him 'to restrain the flow of ministers travelling to China," a foreign ministry official said Monday. The rush to go to Beijing was "counter-productive," Mr. Peres charged, and asked that his ministry coordinate visits. Israel and China established diplomatic relations on Jan. 24, 1992, during a visit by former Foreign Minister David Levy. Ex-President Chaim Herzog sealed the rapprochment with a controversial trip in December the same year when he used a Jewish billionaire's private plane. Mr. Peres followed that up with a six-day sojourn last May and Mr. Rabin went to China himself for four days in October. Now four more ministers are jostling for a junket, according to the foreign ministry.

Ciller and Bhutto to go to Sarajevo

ANKARA (AFP) - The prime ministers of Turkey and Pakistan, Tansu Ciller and Benazir Bhutto, will travel together to Sarajevo next month in a gesture of solidarity with the city's besieged Muslims. Ms. Ciller was quoted Monday as saying. Ms. Ciller told reporters on the plane taking her to Brussels Sunday to attend the NATO summit that she and Ms. Bhutto would go to Sarajevo on Feb. 2, the Turkish press reported. Ms. Ciller said she discussed the visit to the Bosnian capital with Ms. Bhutto when the Pakistani leader made an official visit to Turkey last month. "I will give a press conference in Sarjaevo to appeal to the international community to prevent the resurgence of Christian fundamentalism in Europe," Ms.

Moi Tours holy sites in Jerusalem

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) - Kenyan President Paniel Arap Moi visited the holy places of the Old City of Jerusalem and Bethlehem on Monday after laying a wreath at a holocaust memorial. Mr. Moi toured the traditional sites of the three monotheistic religions - the Al Aqsa Mosque, the western wall for Jews and the Christian Holy Sepulchre Church within the walled city. The 30-strong Kenyan delegation went on to the Church of the Nativity in the nearby town of Bethlehem on the occupied West Bank before lunching with Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and signing a cultural exchange accord. The heads of the central banks of Israel and Kenya also signed a cooperation agreement under which Israel will aid Nairohi in market development and foreign currency

Sudanese-British ties have long been prickly Khartoum were withdrawn and

NAIROBI (R) - From the day General Gordon was speared in Khartoum in 1885 to the current row over ambassadors, relations between Sudan and Britain have often been prickly.

Gordon, the most renowned British general of his day, was district of the capital, the daily killed by forces of religious mystic Mohammad Ahmad Abdullah, who called himself the Mahdi and besieged Khartoum while a relief army headed by General Herbert Kitchener dithered its way up

Kitchener eventually routed the Mahdists at the battle of Omdurman and Sudan in effect became a British colony. but strains have persisted through to today's row resulting in expulsions of ambassadors from London and Khar-

Khartoum, feeling snubbed by Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey's decision not to visit the Sudanese capital after his tour of rebel-held areas in the mainly Christian and animist south, last Thursday expel-

led Britain's Ambassador Peter Streams, who was on a visit to Britain at the time. Sudan's President Omar

point was to show Britain that Sudan was no longer a part of the British empire. 'We wanted it as a lesson for them... that we are indepen-

Hassan Al Bashir said the

dent and will not permit anyone to harm our independence." he said in an independence day speech On Tuesday, after warning Sudan for several days it

should resemb Mr. Stream's expulsion or face the consequences. Britain expelled Sudan's ambassador to London, Ali Osman Yassin, Although Sudan has been independent of Britain since 1956, relations between the

former master and the former colony in recent years have often been strained, not just because Britain tends to be home for many Sudanese opposition groups. In October 1988 then Prime

Minister Sadeq Al Mahdi accused Kenya, Ethiopia, Israel

Alques pharmacy

and unnamed foreign powers of supporting southern rebels fighting perceived Islamic domination by Khartoum, Mr. Mahdi said some European powers aimed at dividing Sudan.

In February 1988, the British Foreign Office summoned the Sudanese ambassdor to explain reports that Sudan had commandeered British food aid trucks for use in army operations against rebel strongholds.

On June 30, 1989, Mr. Mahdi's civilian government was toppled in a military coup-led by Gen. Bashir who, with close ties to Iran, has adopted an increasingly military stance. Relations with Britain and other Western powers have deteriorated.

In January 1991, Britain said it was stopping all develop-ment aid to Sudan and urged its citizens to leave the country after Sudanese authorities freed five Palestinians convicted of killing five British citizens in May 1988. Ten staff with the British

Council cultural agency in

Electric Power

tighter restrictions were imposed on granting visas to Sudanese wishing to visit Bri-The British government

advised members of the British community in the Khartoum area who did not feel their presence was essential to leave the country. The five Palestinians, widely suspected of belonging to Abia Nidal's Fatch Revolutionary

by the Sudanese judiciary. which said they had been pardoned by their victims' fami-Seven people including two Sudanese were killed and 21 including three Americans

Conneil, were freed on Jan. 1

were wounded in the gun and grenade attacks on a hotel and British club in Khartoum. In November 1992, Britain's embassy in Sudan advised the British community to consider

sending its dependants home in view of famine in the country and the tense situation in the Gulf after Iraq's invasion of

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR IRBID: Dr. Ali Al Shuqam different altitudes: winds will be north

JORDAN TELEVISION Tel: 773111-19

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PROGRAMME TWO ... Le Monde Sous Marin Le Chateau Des Oliviers News in French 19:15 Le Grands Moments Du Cirque 20:00 20:30 . The Respected Family News in English

PRAYER TIMES

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CHURCHES

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Church of Nazarene Tel.675691

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Spints Tcl. 65493

Bulletin supplied by the Department of

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FOR THE TRAVELLER **QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RI) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always he verified.

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in the Kirghiz Republic was received Monday by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali who discussed with him educational cooperation.

Kakiev, said after the meeting that views on educational matters were identical, noting that both sides agreed on the need vide the highest possible level of education in both countries. The Kirghiz Republic, home

to 4.5 million people, lies in a strategic central Asian location and has links with various cultures around it, said the visiting minister.

was received by Minister of Planning Ziyad Fariz who discussed cooperation among Islamic states in socio-econo-'mic development.'

They agreed on setting forth a study to find a proper mechanism for exchanges of educational, cultural and other expertise between the two

Dr. Fariz stressed that the Jordanian government was willing to provide Kirghiz Republic with its needs of teachers at the education and higher education levels and to launch cooperation with the central Asian republic in scientific research projects related

ducting talks with Jordanian ministers and touring a number of educational institutions in the Kingdom.



Mufti to take part in meetings on education

AMMAN - In'am Al Mufti, adviser to Her Majesty Queen Noor for Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) planning, development and international relations, will Wednesday participate in the meetings of the International Committee on

the Middle East region in the lour-day meetings, which are organised in Paris by the Unted Nations Children's Fund

liscussions of the report of the working group on education

Participants at the meetings education and international essistance in this field.



Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali (centre) Monday attends graduation ceremony of senior civil servants. Present at the meeting are Deputy

Prime Minister Maan Abu Nowar (right) and Civil Service Commission Pre. dent Abdullah

Premier encourages citizens to participate in decision-making

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Monday stressed the importance of safeguarding public freedoms and encouraging citizens' participation in the decision-making process.

Addressing the graduation ceremony of senior civil servants who were enrolled in a training programme organised at the Institute of Public Administration, Dr. Majali said the government was trying to make public participation in the decision-making process a reality, and added that citizens should express their views freely and should take part in discussions as well as finding solutions to existing problems.

"We are working on finding the so-called administrative chain links starting from the Cabinet, where every minister is member of the Council of Ministers and at the same time is heading his ministry through its directors, and every director heads a group of employees,"

He pointed out that the government is seeking to make this chain include school students where "a teaching staff member will be as an elder brother for them, acting in the same way like the Cabinet."

Encouraging citizens to feel free to express their views, Dr. Majali said: "We are all free to talk about problems and introduce solutions to that, which we think would be successful, and we are also free to discuss any issue of concern to public

He called on civil servants to refrain from personalising any issue and urged them to discuss issues in a manner that would

serve the national interests. Institute Director Zuhair Al Kayed delivered an address at the ceremony in which he underlined the importance of providing training for administrators and civil servants.

The government, Dr. Kayed said, had worked on preparing a national training plan which is being carried out by the institute for the second consecutive year .

Some 1,700 civil servants have thus far enrolled in programmes organised by the institute and some 3,000 other are expected to enroll in similar programmes in 1994, he said.

The ceremony was attended by Deputy Prime Minister Maan Abu Nowar, several Cabinet members and the president of the Civil Service Commission, Abdullah Ulayan.



addresses a meeting of representatives from Hourani, director general of the Social 12 Arab countries on social security issues. Security Corporation (Petra photo)

Minister of Labour Khaled Ghzawi Monday Present at the meeting is Mohammad Saleh

Meeting discusses Arab cooperation in social security

AMMAN (PETRA) — Delegates representing 12 Arab

states Monday opened a threeday meeting to discuss ways of bolstering cooperation among Arab countries in social securThe Arab Labour Organisa-tion (ALO) is determined to join hands with the Arab countries in order to raise the level of cooperation among them in social security matters and expand and upgrade social security systems in the Arab World, announced Baker Rasoul,

opening session.

In the past 25 years of its existence, the ALO has set up the pan-Arab Centre for Social Security in Khartoum to boost cooperation among Arab states and has contributed to a large extent to helping Arab states develop their systems,

labour, delivered the opening speech at the outset of the meeting, attended by 100 participants, in which he underlined Jordan's keenness on caring for the social security of workers who, he said, shoulder the task of production and con-

The minister welcomed development in the social security systems and upgrading of legislations which, he said, would ensure expanding of services and better protection to

Mr. Ghzawi said that the delegates, who represent governments, workers and employers, are bound to benefit from their consultations and the exchange of views and introduce modernisation to the Arab social security systems

Giving due care to social security matters, he added, is one of the main components of developing socio-economic fields in the Arab World.

In the three-day meetings, the delegates are scheduled to discuss working papers cover-ing concepts of social security in Islam, developing and modernising the existing Arab systems and cooperation among Arab states in addition to an ALO general report on achievements and future plans.

Delegates attending the meeting are all directors of social security organisations and representatives of labour ministries of the Arab World. coming from Bahrain, Syria, Oman, Egypt, Iraq, Yemen, Tunisia, Sudan, Libya, Palestine, Mauritania and Jordan.

Majali pledges government's support for Jerusalem commission

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali Monday pledged that the government would provide all facilities and the essential climate for the newly-appointed Royal Commission for Jerusalem Affairs to enable its members to conduct the required research work and undertake their various responsibilities.

In a letter to His Majesty King Hussein, in reply to Sunday's message he received from the Monarch, the prime minister said that the commission will be assisted in all possible manners in order to help it

carry out its task of consolidating the facts about Jerusalem and highlighting the role of the Hashemites in safeguarding the Holy City and upholding Arab and Islamic rights in the holy places.

The message was in reply to

the King's letter in which he renamed the commission members who will be serving under the chairmanship of His Royal Highness Crown Prince

King Hussein said that the government ought to facilitate the work of the commission and sufficient funds should be made available to ensure the success of its mission.

The new commission, King Hussein told Dr. Majali, would exert constant efforts, deep scientific studies designed to highlight the status of Jerusalem "to clarify our relationship with the city and to embark on a comprehensive, informational, cultural and guiding role through the help of scholars and historians in the Arab and Islamic World."

In his reply message, the prime minister said that the choice of Prince Hassan at the helm of the commission was the strongest indicator of the importance attached to the commission's mission.

"In all situations, Prince Hassan has shouldered the prime responsibilities and rose to any occasion, and your. choice of the commission members was very wise indeed as they all have proven to be-worthy of trust" said the prime.

minister.

Your decision to form the new commission, which is entrusted with a serious mission. came on the day of Al Israa Wal Mi'raj and at a time when the Holy City is facing constant danger aimed at obliterating its Arab and Islamic identity,

Japanese official's visit to the region prompted by 'rapid developments in peace process'

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Japanese Deputy Foreign Minister Hiroshi Fukuda arrived here Sunday on a four-day visit as part of a Middle East tour aimed at exchanging views with the region's leaders on the peace

Mr. Fukuda, who travelled overland to Jordan from Israel through the West Bank across the King Hussein Bridge, is scheduled to be received by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali on Monday.

A diplomatic source said Mr. Fukuda's visit was prompted by "rapid develop-ments in the Middle East peace process."

Describing the visit as very important, the source said: 'Japan is closely following up all events in the peace process and likes to have a regular exchange of views of all parties involved in the peace regotiations.'

Mr. Fukuda, wh leaves Jordan on Jan. 13, already met with Israeli officials in occupied Jerusalem, where he began his visit. He will also visit Syria and

Egypt.
The Japanese minister, who is paying his first visit to the Middle East after assuming office, is closely involved in his country's role in the multilateral phase of the

peace process. Japan chairs the multilateral working group on the environment and is an active member of the working group on water.

Mr. Fukuda's visit to the region follows a recent meeting in Tokyo of the steering committee of the multilateral

The Japanese minister will also be discussing Jordanian-Japanese relations and follow up on the recent visit to Japan by Prime Minister Ma-

During the visit, Japanese

leaders, including Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa, voiced appreciation of Jordan's active participation in the peace process and reaffirmed their government's commitment to helping the Kingdom address its econo-

Also expected to be re-viewed during Mr. Fukuda's visit is an \$80 million Japanese loan to help develop Jordan's energy sector.

The loan, which will match a similar loan from the World Bank that Jordan has already received, could be merged into a \$150 million soft-credit for Jordan under consideration by the Tokyo government. The credit will finance the expansion of the Agaba

Thermal Power Plant. Japan, which holds around \$900 million of Jordan's foreign debts of \$6.88 million, has promised to help Jordan alleviate its external debt burden through rescheduling

In principle, Japan opposes debt write-off and advocates "help for those who help themselves." Japanese officials have expressed appreciation of the measures adopted by Jordan and say that such policies are behind the continued Japanese interest in extending aid to the Kingdom.

Jordan is expected to receive between \$30 million and \$40 million in Japanese aid during 1994, officials said shortly after Dr. Majali's visit to Japan last month.

Japan, which grew from the ashes of its economy after the war to become one of the top international aid donors. insists that aid recipients depend on themselves to develop their economies and repay foreign debts in the long term rather than seeking debt relief in the form of

The bulk of Jordan's dues to Japan (up to \$800 million) is in the form of soft loans with one per cent annual interest and repayable in 30 years. The loans were mostly extended shortly after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 and aimed at helping Jordan absorb its economic losses from the crisis sparked by the invasion.

Jordan does not qualify for outright Japanese grants since Tokyo continues to follow an international convention which allows assistance to be given to countries with less than \$800 per capita income. Jordan's per capita in-come was \$1,020 in 1992.

Test-tube babies boom in Jordan as Europe frets than 300 test-tube babies since

By Rana Sabbagh

AMMAN — In a region where infertility can make you an outcast, Dr. Zeid Al Kilani is helping childless couples to procreate and boosting Jordan's expanding medical services industry.

Dr. Kilani, the Arab World's pioneer of test-tube babies, is in great demand at his shining new Amman hospital at a time of anguished debate in Europe about the ethics of making children in a laboratory.

"God please let me become a mother," pleaded Basma Subhi, 34, who came to Dr. Kilani's Farah Hospital from Yemen for treatment.

Her husband Ahmed, a soldier who borrowed money from his family to take his wife to Jordan, stood by her recalling their desperate search for a doctor who could help.

She had just left the operating room where doctors started the 48-hour process by removing an egg from her ovary. The egg will be injected with her husband's sperm. If fertilised it will be implanted in her womb to begin a normal pregnancy.

The couple were among dozens streaming to Jordan for treatment at the private hospital. In the Arab World, childless couples often feel social outcasts. Many men with infertile wives take extra spouses. German-educated Kilani, .54, has helped create more

Artificial fertilisation of barren and post-menopause

starting his in vitro fertilisation

women has triggered an ethical and legal debate in Europe. Controversy erupted after a 59-year-old British woman gave birth to test-tube twins and a black woman was reported to have received a white embryo.

Questions are also being asked about creating children from the sperm and ovarian tissue of dead fathers and mothers - even using aborted foetuses to produce the genetic offspring of someone who was never born.

France wants the European Union to harmonise rules on test-tube babies to avoid 'medical tourism" by wealthy, infertile women. It wants to restrict artificial fertilisation to infertile, living couples of

child-bearing age.
Dr. Kilani hopes low charges and a proven track record will attract couples from Europe and the United States on a package combining medical treatment and tourism.

Last year, he opened a multi-million-dollar four-storey hospital in central Amman, staffed by a team of 28 doctors, laboratory technicians and

It now treats male infertility by micro-insemination - injecting a single sperm into the outer shell of an egg under a special microscope. Attitudes in the region to dramatically in the past eight years, Dr. Kilani said. But his battle to launch new techni-

ques was not easy. He first turned to Jordan's grand mufti, the senior Muslim authority. He ruled in 1985 that IVP for a married couple was acceptable as long as only the couple's sperm and egg were used.

Dr. Kilani set up a small, specially-equipped clinic. He persevered in spite of an attempt by a religiously-motivated group to burn down his centre.

After several failures, Jordan's first test-tube baby was born in April 1987. Inside Dr. Kilani's clinic,

women from all walks of life, some in traditional Muslim headdress, sit in a waiting room discussing their struggle to have a baby.

The treatment has not only helped parents, but has been a boost for Jordan's efforts to become a regional medical centre. Success in treating male infertility, Dr. Kilani said, came only months after similar results in Europe.

"You are not only giving hope and happiness to thousands of hopeless and mis-erable people, but medically speaking, for Jordan this is a top achievement as there is hardly a gap between us and the West," Dr. Kilani said. Jordan's first micro-insemi-

nation baby was born in October, only five months after the

"We opened our doors to male factor treatment last December and we got the first pregnancy in February, a healthy boy, followed by twins," Dr. Kilani said. "We are very, very, very happy with our re-

According to figures released by the eighth world congress on IHV in Japan, 25 of 452 women who conceived through micro-insemination worldwide by September were at Dr. Kilani's centre.

According to Dr. Kilani, the hospital's micro-insemination and IVH programmes have a 20 per cent and a 22 per cent. success rate, which he says are . comparable to those in the

Couples pay about \$1,500 for his micro-insemination programme, compared to costs: that he said could reach up to \$45,600 abroad.

Dr. Kilani hopes normalisation of Arab-Israeli ties under . Middle East peace talks will. bring clients from Israel. although the Jewish state hopes to attract Arabs to its own impressive test-tube baby

I am sure we will have an influx to our centre," he said. "If they feel safe, they will come here because we have very good results and are very reasonably priced.'

Ma'an man missing with JD 9,000

"He was supposed to be back sometime Thursday evening, but the did not show up or try to contact his family," Mr. Kreishan added.

cious of their son's disappearance and notified all police stations and hospitals in Ma'an, in an effort to locate him.

According to Mr. Kreishan, the father and police questioned all service taxi drivers and money changers that Hussein could have passed by, but of his disappearance.

Ma'an is angry and shocked by the mysterious disappearance of Hussein and all are working together and have conducted a wide campaign in areas nearby to try to find Hussein," Mr. Kreishan explained. Four years ago, Mr.

Kreishan added, the Ma'an community experienced a similar tragedy when a sheep merchant was also reported missing with a large amount of money on him. His body was discovered a month after his desappearance.

Until Monday evening, no news of the missing man was reported. Mr. Kreishan said that Hussein's family are placing an advertisement, with a JD 5,000 reward, in local newspapers for any person who gives any information that will help lead to their son.

3 people die in

civil defence reports.

Ahmad Hani was playing in the street in the Darar area when he was hit by the car. When civil defence officers arrived to the scene of the accident, the child was already

dead. They took him to

Mouadi Sihi Hospital. A traffic

official said it was the driver's Meanwhile, in Al Quesmeh area, a 70-year-old woman was rushed to Al Bashir Hospital. Sunday, after a gas stove fell on her in her house, according

to civil defence reports.

Mariam A.A. died later in hospital of third degree burns. In Al Shouneh Al Shemalizh area, the drowned body of a 65-year-old man was pulled by civil defence officials from King Abdullah Canal Sunday, according to civil defence re-

"When civil defence officers arrived to the canal, the man was already dead," a civil de-

fence official told the Jordan Times. The official maintained that civil defence officers are still investigating the accident to determine what caused the man to drown.

Youth shoots friend by accident

A 20-year-old youth was shot accidentally, Sunday, by his 24-year-old friend while playing with his gun, according to police and civil defence re-

Ahmed Khaled, was carried to Al Bashir Hospital for gun wounds to the face and neck. He was listed in bad condition.

according to hospital reports. Police reports indicate that the youngsters were playing when a bullet was fired accidentally striking the boy in his face. Police have seized the weapon and are investigating the case.

AMMAN (Petra) — Visiting Minister of Higher Education

The visiting minister. T. to promote cooperation to pro-

Earlier, the Kirghiz minister

to development planning.

Mr. Kakiev has been con-



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Education for the 21st century. Mrs. Mufti is representing

UNICEF). On Monday, Mrs. Mufti look part in the preliminary

md science, which will end Tuesday. will discuss working papers on education and higher educaion, development of basic

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS Photo exhibition by artist Muwaffaq Al Sheikh at the Royal Cultural Centre.

-- Art exhibition by artist Sadik Kwaish entitled "Talisma" at Baladna Art Gallery. * Exhibition on the 100th anniversary of the death of French novelist Guy De Maupassant at the French Cultural Centre.

* Exhibition of Iraqi books at the Royal Cultural Centre.

☆ Exhibition "Prints and Drawings of Fakhrelnissa Zeid"

(1915-1991) until the 15th of January '94 at Darat al Funun of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation. Also showing the "Permanent" Exhibition. (Tel. 643251/2).

DRAMA ☆ Drama for children entitled "The Question" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

★ Bulgarian film entitled "Everything is Love" at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation at 06:30 p.m.

LECTURES AND SEMINARS

Seminar in Arabic entitled "Investment in Palestine and Fears of People in the Occupied Homeland" with the participation of Dr. Nabil Kokali and Mr. Ahmad Abdeen at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation at 6:00 p.m. ☆ Lecture in English entitled: "Aspects of Bilateral Relations

☆ Seminar attended by writers and journalists interested in women's issues in Jordan at the Phoenix Gallery for Art and Culture at 6:00 p.m.

Between German Companies And Their Partners in the

Near East" by Friederike Adlung at Goethe-Institut at 7:00

ALO director general, at the

said Mr. Rasoul. Khaled Ghzawi, minister or

the workers.

By Rana Husseini Special to the Jordan Times AMMAN — Police and family members are looking for a 22-year-old Ma'an man missing

since Thursday, Jan. 6, in what

appeared to be the first re-

ported case of its kind in sever-

al years, according to Sa'ad

Kreishan, a family member. Hussein, the third son of Mohammad Kreishan, a merchant who lives in Ma'an, was dropped off by his father at a service taxi station. He had on him 50,000 Saudi riyals (JD 9,000) to exchange in Amman. Mr. Kreishan told the Jordan Times.

father dropped him at the stanon and left before checking if his son took a car to Amman or not," Mr. Kreishan said. He added that it is a mysterious case that involves, most

likely, the Ma'anis because ev-

"We are not sure what hap-

pened to him, because his

erybody was used to seeing father and son carrying large sums of money regularly from Ma'an to Amman.

The family became suspi-

all denied seeing him the day "The whole community in separate accidents

A three-year-old Balqa child was killed Sunday when he was run over by a car driven by a 45-year-old man, according to

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Messenger with bad news?

YESTERDAY, IN a meeting with members of the so-called "Monday circle" (which is a group of journalists and diplomats who every Monday host a prominent personality for indepth briefing), the prime minister, blamed the media for perpetuating the strain in Jordan's relations with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. During the one-hour encounter, Dr. Majali also blasted the media for its nandling of the debate over the much-opposed amendment to the Election Law and for creating what he termed tension between government and Parliament in the days leading to the confidence session in early December. Only three weeks ago, the conflict-ridden Jordanian People's Democratic Party issued a statement in which it blamed four periodicals of conspiring to tarnish the image of the newly-formed group. And at about the same time, when infighting within the Islamic Action Front surfaced strongly and led to mass resignations in its central committee, the Front secretary general told journalists at a press conference that the press was totally responsible for "inflating" the problem.

Journalists are of course used to politicians blaming them for their own problems. This is being repeated on daily basis in most if not all, including the most democratic societies. Journalists, it should be recognised, should bear little or no responsibility for improving ties among states, nor for contributing to their deterioration. They are after information that they feel should be dissemenated to the public. The public, it must be remembered, has the right to know what their govern-

In the case of the one-person, one-vote amendment to the Election Law, it is unfair to say that the media portrayed it as directed against the Islamists. The Islamists themselves and most of other political activists were saying this all the time. The media only printed what was being said by politicians and political analysts.

That too was exactly the case with reports on rifts within the People's Democratic Party or the Islamic Action

As for writers, who bear the responsibility in a free and democratic society for their views, it must be understood that more often than not the opinions reflect the sentiments of the people. If our neighbours cannot or do not want to accept that our democracy is dependent on a free press then that is their problem. Or are they in fact worried altogether by democracy itself and are pressuring us into a reversal?

While we think that the answer to this question is in the affirmative, we want to remind critics that the press only echoes the sentiment of a people, who in this case at least still feels bitter for the punishment meted out on Jordanian nationals in Kuwait immediately following the Gulf war and whose reverberations continue to this very

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i Arabic daily criticised the newly concluded Jordanian-Palestinian pact as bringing nothing new for the two sides. The negotiations on both sides have let down their peoples by signing deal that does not provide for practical steps to fuse the two peoples' unity or at least pave the ground for genuine cooperation and coordination, said Fahed Al Fanek. The pact, signed on Jan. 7, is more rhetoric than a real achievement and served as an appeasement for the Jordanian and Palestinian people. but it did not provide anything concrete, said Fanek. The only new thing stemming from the deal in the opening of Jordanian banks' branches in the West Bank, said the writer. But, he added, this is totally in the hands of the Israeli authorities which can say yes or no. The point about the continued use of the Jordanian currency is not new because the Palestinians have been using this currency all along since the 1967 occupation of their land, he pointed out. The writer said that there is nothing in the pact that states that Jordan and Palestine will become a united market and the only reference to this point was a clause calling on the two sides to encourage free trade exchanges, but this clause is of course not binding to anyone. The term "encourage" could at any moment be deleted since it means nothing for the two sides and so is the case with the terms consultations, coordination, etc. added the writer. If anything, he said, the pact reaffirms the fact that the two sides had never been in agreement about any of these points before and the negotiators who drafted it offered only lip-service to the public.

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A COLUMNIST in Al Dustour said democracy, justice and respect of laws are not often honoured by the state's establishments. It so often happens that certain personalities suddenly acquire public administration positions not because they have applied and waited for the post for so long after graduation but rather because they are relatives or friends of the responsible person who has created particular positions to fit them, said Taher Al Udwan. The former Parliament had debated this question, prompting the then-government to set up what case to be known as the "inspection department " at the Prime Ministry to control such excesses, but it seems that many persons are getting away with it and succeeding in getting senior positions which often are secured under a 'contract" category, said the writer. It happens that often the apponitee is a retired civil servant or one who has resigned public office to run for elections, but failed, added Udwan. This is clearly unfair to the army employees who have been waiting years and working diligently to acquire senior posts and improve their status, and unfair and unjust to the queues of college graduates who have been waiting for many years to get a job, stressed the writer. Nepotism and favouritism are widespread in Jordan nowadays, said the writer who asked whether the country has any laws to control such practices. He said that as long as this injustice continues, the future of democracy will be grim.

The View from Fourth Circle

Provincialism and humanism in the Jordan-PLO

The Jordanian-Palestinian agreement that was signed a few days ago has been called a comprehensive framework for bilateral economic relations, as it has been called a vague or even a hollow accord that has little practical meaning. The very different perceptions of the agreement strike me as extremely revealing of the broader political context which defines the actions of most actors in the contemporary Middle

Our region is in the midst of a historic reconfiguration that sees small and large entities alike scrambling to define their roles, to secure their rights and to assure their well-being during a moment of profound regional transformation that could be threatening or promising, depending on how things develop in the years to come. Jordan and Palestine, along with other small entities such as Lebanon and Kuwait, are each exploring the most appropriate means of self-assertion and

For thousands of years, the cultural character and economic-political power flows of this region have traditionally been defined by developments in several key centres, notably Damascus, Cairo, Baghdad and Istanbul, with Tehran, Beirut and the Gulf oil producers playing a role in recent decades. A quick glance throughout the region shows that all of these traditional centres of civilisation and/or economic power are experiencing various degrees of distress.

I think there are three basic, related reasons for this situation. The first is that the post-World War I fragmentation of the traditional national configurations in our region has reached a decisive moment; the many countries formed during this century are having to work harder to assert their credibility and viability and to assure the well-being of their people. The concept of many small, independent Arab states divided from one another by legal frontiers and bureaucratic barriers is a historical anomaly. This runs counter to the dominant historical patterns of the last several thousand years. when people, goods, money and ideas moved freely throughout the Middle East within loose regional systems of governance that were held together by the power that emanated from

centres such as the capitals mentioned above.

The second reason is that parallel with this fragmentation and compartmentalisation of national entities, all the individual countries of our region are experiencing severe stress on their resource bases. Populations continue to expand at a very brisk rate, but fragmented economies and pressures on water and land resources cannot provide sufficiently for the needs of the people of this region. Consequently, and perhaps naturally, individual countries are scrambling to assure their well-being on a unilateral or bilateral basis, working within an increasingly narrow scope of vision.

The third reason is that the regional/global order that we have lived with during the past half a century is disappearing. The two defining geo-political forces that maintained the regional order in the Middle East since mid-century — the East-West cold war and the Arab-Israeli conflict - have either vanished or are in the process of vanishing. With the sudden breakdown of the binding geo-political forces that maintained the old Middle Eastern order, many small and large countries in this region are scrambling to define new forces of survival and development.

The Jordanian-Palestinian accord, viewed within this broader historical, geographical and political framework, appears to be an inevitable and logical development. The arguments for and against the accord, and the contentious. hurried manner in which it was formulated, are a sign of the times. Viewed within the narrow parameters of relations between the people of Jordan and Palestine, the accord is merely one of many such attempts since the early decades of this century to define formal political and economic relationships between relatively small, homogenous groups of Arabs in Jordan and Palestine.

But viewed in the broader regional contemporary context defined by the three forces I have outlined above, the accord is part and parcel of a much larger trend in our region that sees all regional actors working to redefine relationships in the wake of the breakdown of old ones.

Historically, small entities (whether formal states, sub-regional tribal confederations or ethnic/religious groups) defined their status and assured their well-being according to their relationships with the historical power centres in Damas-cus, Cairo, Baghdad and Istanbul. The 20th century also saw local actors positioning themselves close to new power and fiscal centres, whether regional ones such as Tehran and Rivadh, or international neo-imperial commercial and military powers such as London, Washington and Moscow.

The crises that define the major regional centres, however, and the general disinterest in the region by the foreign powers whose access to Middle Eastern oil is secure, have brought about the current situation. Cairo, Baghdad, Damascus, Tehran, Istanbul and Riyadh are busy with their own domestic problems; they and the global powers that provided national anchorage for the people of the Middle East have suspended or abdicated their traditional responsibilities. The people of this region, taken on a regional level, are patriarchies withou

The two new indigenous forces that emerged from the grassroots of this region during this century — Arab nationalism and politicised Islam - could have played an important stabilising role. But both of them have yet to mature and to take root as new anchors of national identity and regional

socio-economic development. The third force that could play this role — an indigenous brand of democratic pluralism in which civil society structures forge stable personal political identity and national allegiance - is in the process of being born in some countries, among which is Jordan.

Until this process matures and spreads throughout the region, however, we will continue to scramble and to seek national survival on the basis of narrow self-interest. This is the inevitable consequence of our region's status as a collection of vulnerable and largely dependent states living in a post-imperial, post-decolonisation, post-cold war, and post-Arab-Israeli conflict world whose ancient poles of power and culture have all relinquished their historical roles. Our world has changed radically in the last few years, but most of us in this region have not changed in line.

The Jordanian-Palestinian accord is a very localised dimension of this regional imperative for change. It is driven by Jordanian and Palestinian needs, but it is also driven by a certain fear that has been evident since the signing of the PLO-Israel accord in September - the fear that we may be vulnerable to economic domination by Israel in a post-war

I believe this fear is unjustified, because Israel is not exactly a shining example of a strong, creative, expansive economy. Rather, it is an economic basket case that is deeply dependent on American grants, contributions from Jews around the world, War World II reparations and other sources of funds that are the antithesis to free market dynamism. Israel certainly has technological power, but we in the Arab World will be able to match Israel's expertise if and when we transcend our modern legacy of political and intellectual autocracy and free the ample creative talent of our people. There is a certain Arab hysteria about Israel's future

economic and political dominance of our region, and I believe that this also relates directly to the lost anchorage of our people. The Jordan-PLO accord is a small, local, but constructive sign that some fragments of the Arab World are trying to reconstruct new national configurations that can serve the long-term interests of the Arab people.

The rebirth of the Arabs will require similar developments on a regional level, especially in the great traditional centres of culture, politics and economy in Damascus, Cairo and Baghdad. To argue the fine print of the Jordan-PLO accordisto miss the larger picture of our economy and our national identity, to be blinded by the harsh glare of provincialism rather than to honour the bountful legacy of our Arab/Islamic

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Global culture: The paradox of U.S. dominance

By David Rieff

NEW YORK — "A civilisation progress from agriculture to paradox," the Romanian aphorist E. M. Cioran once wrote. It is not a conviction that sits particularly well with Americans, who tend to shy away from contradictions and, instead, continue to believe that solutions exist for every

And yet a dual paradox informs the American situation following the cold war. The first part concerns how a country by tradition and disposition more self-absorbed than most became the animating spirit of the global culture that more and more predominates from Guangdong to Berlin. The second offers the spectacle of a nation whose official ideology is increasingly the "celebration" of diversity, while it remains culturally, although not racially, astonishingly homogeneous not to say conformist, in its attitudes.

"All you Americans talk and talk about is diversity," a French intellectual exclaimed in exasperation at the end of an American Studies conference held in Paris last year, "so what I want to know is how it is that you all sound the same?"

A caustic observer might have responded by taking the Frenchman's question a step further and insisting that the genius of the multiculturalist movement was its ability to appear radical while not in fact threatening the status quo - in much the way that the trend in industrial production towards mass customisation gives consumers the impression of being able to get a product designed expressly for them; in fact, technological advances permit an almost infinite segmenta-

tion of the consumer base. In a sense, this process of segmentation, whether expressed in the fracturing of "high culture" or the proliferation of television channels, or in the multiplication of affinity groups in which people define themselves in terms of being subject to some behavioural pathology, is less the feature of a traditional nation-state than of a world. If one thinks of the United States as having become a universe at least as

much as it remains a country, divisions within it make more

All empires, even of the peculiar American kind, eventually become "world nations," in Walt Whitman's celebrated phrase. If only because this experience of selling to such a monolithically consumerist but segmented public has been the defining experience of American capitalism for so long, it should come as no surprise that the global consumer culture — particularly in the realm of movies, music and food --- has remained almost an American monopoly in a time when U.S. begemony in other industries has been shattered.

No wonder so many Americans remain so confident that their parochial concerns and self-definitions are shared by everyone. With some real exceptions (for example, the Indian film industry within India) it is Hollywood, the American music industry and American food chains that predominate.'

The Europeans, the French in particular, are terrified by this. French politicians, cultural impresarios and performers tend to talk about what is produced in New York and Los Angeles in rather the same tones as environmentalists talk about the Brazilian farmers who are burning the Amazon - as an unstoppable horde that will destroy all in its path unless confronted by force.

To them, the situation is clear. If Europe does not resist this American cultural invasion, as a French official remarked to the weekly L'Express, "there will soon develop a standardised world culture created according to American norms.

There are those who dismiss such fears, believing them to be overstated or insisting that America's preeminence in mass culture will inevitably go the way of its dominance in other industries. According to the latter model, cultural power moves with financial and industrial power. When Holland was at its apogee, Dutch styles in bome furnishings were imitated all over the world. But, this argument runs, when Holland declined, the world turned to other models. To some degree, the recent

rise of Germany and Japan confirms that such processes still occur. Few countries that become powerful do not succeed (Germany is the obvious exception here) in imposing their national cuisines on the rest of the bourgeois world or influencing high fashion.

But successfully imposing a taste for sushi or Jil Sander linen jackets is not the same thing as engendering a global mass culture as the United States has done in the 20th century. It is all the more surprising, then, that the American domination of mass culture has only intensified in a period when American power in other domains has waned. And yet the fact remains that now, American mass culture is everywhere triumphant.

In many instances, the financing for, say, a Hollywood studio will come from overseas, and it is commonplace that the people produc-ing this "American" culture are often imported, like National Hockey League players, from overseas. But such diverse fads as bungee jumping and cigarette smoking, although they did not originate in the United States, seem to gain worldwide acceptance through their commodification another way of describing their Americanisation.

Jules Verne was interested in dinosaurs, but no French movie company could possibly have produced "Jurassic Park." In this, as in any number of other instances, cultural nationalists like the French political class are right to be fearful.

The class character of the objection is worth noting. What is probably most distinctive about American popular culture is its resolutely popular character. As not only the prestige but the economic significance of high culture wanes (and operas, symphony orchestras and museums increasingly can survive only through state subsidy or private philanthropy), it becomes more and more irrelevant to our common cultural future. And in an era of high culture's eclipse, the market can reassert itself. All things being equal, Walthan Gucci, just as Bruce Springsteen is more valuable as a cultural commodity (both in the literal sense of return on investment and in terms of the numbers of people throughout the world who are affected by him) than even such desperate popularisers as Luciano Pavar-

There are exceptions, of course. Very poor countries have succeeded in preserving their culture authenticity. It can even be argued that the constant flows of immigrants from South to North, and, in the European case, perhaps increasingly from East to West,

will function as cultural "reinforcements" from home, both linguistically and in terms of mores, and will serve as an undertow to the general tidal pull toward homogenisation. But all of this only under-

scores something that most people understand instinctively: that the history of consumerism, like the history of sentiments, proceeds unevenly in different classes and in diffe-: rent parts of the world. The general direction in the world is towards greater similarity.. This process of homogenisation is as yet incomplete.

But compared with the ge-numely diverse world of half a century ago, things have pro-ceeded rapidly. One can now travel the entire world and never be very far from a Coke, a Big Mac or the sound of some American entertainer. There are video rental stores in villages in India where most dwellings still have no electricity. And in Bedouin camps in the Sinai and Zulu kraals in the Transvaai, I have had as many conversations about Bruce Willis and Arnold Schwarzenegger as I have about Allah or King Cetshwayo - International Herald Tribune.

Autonomy deadline in doubt

(Continued from page 1)

estimations are too optimistic and the negotiations should last longer because a lot of problems remain," Mr. Głuska said. "But we will do our best to wrap it all up as soon as possible.

The two delegations held a brief plenary session at the Hilton Hotel and then Dr. Shaath and Gen. Shahak met After lunch, which saw Gen.

Shahak and Dr. Shaath chatting by the pool, the plenary session resumed. Both sides said they would meet again Tuesday at the level of subcommittees. 'I'm an optimist by nature

and there is only room here for optimistic men," Gen. Shahak told reporters at the end of the

day.
"I am hopeful this will lead us to conclude an agreement as soon as possible," said Dr. 'Îtwasa day full of activity. We explored all areas in order to draft a final agree-The talks had been sus-

pended since Dec. 29 when the PLO denied an Israeli claim that a deal had been done in Cairo on the main bone of contention. Israeli and Palestinian secre-

taries took notes on Monday to try to avoid future misunderstandings. After a week of vitriolic ex-

changes the two sides announced last Thursday a rebasis of the declaration of principles and the "Cairo understandings."

The negotiations have stumbled over the control of border crossing from the autonomous areas of the Gaza Strip and Jericho, the size of Jericho and security issues On the eve of the talks,

clashes in the Gaza Strip refugee camp of Bureij between supporters and opponents of autonomy left two Palestinians dead and five wounded, Palestinian reports said.

Military officers told the cabinet Sunday that support for the accord in the occupied territories was plummeting. Missing the Dec. 13 dateline killed the euphoria in the occupied lands that had followed the accord.

After weeks of talks between teams led by Gen. Shahak and Dr. Shaath failed to reach agreement on the terms of implementation, higherlevel delegations moved their discussions from Oslo to Paris to Cairo. But the last Cairo round two

weeks ago added an element of

confusion and mistrust to the differences because the sides disagreed about whether an understanding had been reached.

Mr. Peres said a formula for joint Israeli and Palestinian control of border crossings, and an area of 55 square kilometres for Jericho, had been agreed to by his Palestinian counterpart.

But PLO chief Yasser Arafat nixed the plan and PLO officials insisted it had never been an agreement, only and Israeli proposal.

The Davar daily newspaper quoted an unidentified senior negotiator saying the talks have returned to the starting point, and would require extended negotiations and further intervention by top officials. Despite the delays, many

Israeli right-wing leaders maintain that the crisis with the PLO was largely a fiction calculated to draw attention away from impending Israeli 'concessions",

Dan Margalit, a pro-Rabin commentator in the liberal Haaretz daily, wrote that 'Rabin's sourness with Arafat ... has contributed to public support for the government.

Damascus meeting backs accord (Continued from page 1)

aid to Egypt and Syria promised in the declaration, pledging only to examine the question of funding three development projects in Syria and three in Egypt.

"We will concentrate on economic and political cooperation, but as for security cooperation it would be dealt with bilaterally between one country and another." Mr. Sharaa said Sunday.

Revolts awaken public to plight of Latin poor

By David Haskel Reuter

WASHINGTON -- Revolts in Mexico and Argentina are making people wonder how long Latin American governments can go on pressing severe austerity policies without effective measures to alleviate

the plight of the poor,
"I think Santiago del Estero and Chiapas are warning light ." said Isaac Cohen, who heads the Washington office of the U.N. Economic Commission for Latin America and the 'Caribbean (ECLAC).

He was referring to incidents

in Mexico's state of Chiapas and Argentina's province of Santiago del Estero, some of the poorest areas in each of the two countries.

More than 100 people were killed in Chiapas - some estimates are as high as 400 after peasants rebelled on new year's day demanding access to jobs, housing and schooling. Two weeks earlier, riots erupted in Santiago del Estero after the government announced it was unable to pay civil servants back wages.

The incidents are particularly noteworthy because they took place in two of the richest

and most successful exponents of the free market drive sweeping across Latin America. "We all welcome free market policies, but for stability to-

Mart is a better investment

be sustained, you also need a frontal attack on poverty," Mr. Cohen said. His words echoed those of the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) which, like ECLAC, has been clamouring

for years for more social policies aimed at lighting poverty. "Growth alone will not solve the problem of poverty it must be confronted directly if growth is to be sustained over

time," the Washington-based

IADB warned last October in its latest annual report.

Following the disastrous experience of the 1980's in which strong government intervention brought about high inflation, capital flight, huge indehtedness and economic chaos, in the 1990's the pendulum swung all the way to the other

State intervention was out private enterprise was in. Privatisation became the buzzword. And in country after country governments decided to let market forces try to bring prosperity in areas where they

The strategy slashed inflation, stabilised the economies, attracted foreign investors and spurred dramatic growth.

However, Latin America's 200 million poor, who have been neglected for years and whose plight worsened during the 1980's, saw no alleviation to their woes.

To the contrary, severe austerity drives led governments to slash social expenditures wand at the same time lay off workers as they sold off or closed down state-owned

Otto Reich, a former assistant administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development and an ex ambassador to Venezuela, said privatisations are welcome, but gov ernments are abruptly retreating from the economic areas creating a dangerous vасицт.

"In the short run you cannot 📑 just throw people out of jets and say go find a new job' when there aren't any. Some temporary measures are absolutely necessary," he said.

However, not everybody agrees on the urgent need to take emergency steps.

Palestinian dissidents overcome differences

AMMAN (AP) — Hardline Palestinian factions have overcome organisational differences that had threatened the survival of a newly formed alliance dedicated to wrecking the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) autonomy

They said reconciliation was achieved after the Islamic Resistance Movement. Hamas, retracted demands for the lion's share in a leadership council of the alliance of Palestinian forces, formed Dec. 16.

Taysir Khalid, an alliance member, said Hamas accepted two seats in the leadership council, equivalent to the number of seats allocated for each of the other nine hardline groups espousing ideologies ranging from Marxism to Isla-

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Mr. Khalid said the agreement was reached during a meeting in Damascus on

Mr. Khalid belongs to the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Plaestine (DFLP), the third largest faction within the PLO after Chairman Yasser Arafat's mainstream Fateh

The DFLP is opposed to Mr. Arafat's negotiating strategy with Israel in the 26-month-old U.S.-backed Middle East

It is particularly opposed to the Israel-PLO agreement reached Sept. 13 and envisages limited autonomy to the nearly two million Arab residents of in the occupied West Bank and

Like other Marxist groups in the Damascus-based alliance, the DFLP argues that the agreement falls short of fulfiliing Palestinian aspirations for an independent state.

Hamas and other Islamic groups in the alliance are vehemently opposed to any dealing with Israel and advocate its total destruction.

The hardliners formed a reectionist front in September 1992 to challenge the PLO's moderate strategy but it has not been able to seriously undermine Palestinian parti-

cipation in the pece process. Since the Israel-PLO accord was signed in September, the 10 groups have been seeking to consolidate the alliance. But their efforts were hampered by calls from Hamas for half of the seats in the leadership council, to reflect the group's clout in the occupied terri-

Hamas has also insisted on forming a new command to replace the leadership of Mr. Arafat, but the DFLP and other factions strongly

opposed the suggestion. Mohammad Nazzal, Hamas representative to Jordan, confirmed that his group backed down on earlier demands, but refused to elaborate.

He only said that the alliance will meet again in Damascus on Jan. 19 to name the members of the leadership council and discuss other organisational matters, including the "escalation of the Palestinian military operations against the Zionist enemy.

In addition to Hamas and the DFLP, other factions in the alliance include Islamic Jihad-Palestine and Hizbollah-Palestine as well as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the second largest group in the PLO.

Also members of the alliance are the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command and Fateh-Uprising, a dissident faction of Mr. Arafat's mainstream group, as well as splinter groups of the pro-Iraq Palestine Liberation Front, the Community Party and the Popular Struggle Front.

Mother of nine killed in latest Algerian violence

ALGIERS (R) - Suspected Muslim fundamentalist gunmen killed an Algerian mother of nine on Sunday near a shop ector in the capital Algiers, police

In their latest report on poliman tical killings in the country. police listed 10 other victims. including four other women. one of them her throat slit as she tried to defend her blind husband from attackers.

A police statement reported by the official news agency APS named the woman killed on Sunday as Aicha Bouchelahem, 47. She died in hospital after she was hit in the head by attackers armed with automatic pistols and hunting rifles.

In another incident on Sunday three employees of Radio Algeria were wounded, one seriously, when gunmen opened fire on the vehicle in which they were travelling in the capital's district of Baraki, APS reported.

Eight Algerian journalists were killed last year, one of them in Baraki, in armed attacks blamed on Islamic fun-

On Saturday three unidentified gunmen killed the mayordesignate of El Ancer, 280 kilometres east of Algiers. police said. A municipal em-

ployee was murdered in a similar attack in the Tiaret area southwest of the capital.

The burned head of an unidentified person was found the same day close to the city hospital in Blida south of



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Suspect denies role in Berlin bombing

BEIRUT (AP) - A Palestinian suspected of masterminding the 1986 bombing of a West Berlin discotheque denied Monday any involvement in the attack that triggered U.S. air strikes on Libya. Yasser Chreidi, 34, claimed innocence during a two-hour interrogation conducted by Chief Prosecutor Mouneef Oweidat,

Mr. Chreidi was arrested July 6, 1993, in connection with the killing of a fellow Palestinian, Jamal Kayed, in South Lebanon. In August, German authorities notified Beirut that they had evidence implicating him in the 1986 murder of a Libyan dissident, Mustafa Ashek, in Berlin. They requested his extradi-

Lebanon declined, citing the absence of an extradition treaty between the two countries. But he was promptly put on trial for the alleged murder of Ashek after his file was forwarded from

Mr. Chreidi has denied he killed Ashek. The criminal court in Sidon is expected to issue a verdict in the Ashek murder case Feb.

In November, Lebanon received a second request for his extradition for alleged involvement in the bombing of La Belle disco in Berlin.

Evidence implicating him in that attack had been obtained from East German secret police files.

Mr. Chreidi was brought Monday to Beirut from his jail cell in the South Lebanon port city of Tyre in a heavily-guarded motorcade.

Mr. Oweidat's press office said after the session that Mr. Chreidi insisted he had nothing to do with the discos bombing or Ashek's murder. He claimed that at the time of these attacks, he was working as a driver at the Libyan embassy in East Berlin. The Berlin prosecutor's office, however, has said Mr. Chreidi was accredited as a diplomat at the Libyan mission in East Berlin. Two off-duty U.S. soldiers and a Turkish woman were killed

and 229 other people wounded in April 5, 1986, bombing of the Citing evidence of Libyan involvement in the La Belle bombing, then U.S. President Ronald Reagan ordered retaliatory air strikes on the Libyan capital, Tripoli, and the city of Benghazi. Mr. Chreidi was a butcher in the 'Ain al Hilweh Palestinian refugee camp near Sidon, provincial capital of South Lebanon,

before leaving for East Germany in 1978. He returned tin 1989 after the collapse of the Berlin Wall. Police say they have evidence that Mr. Chreidi was enlisted by Abu Nidal group shortly after his return to south Lebanon.

Kabul under air attack; historic mosque gutted

KABUL (Agencies) — Warplanes from rival forces continued bombing raids on Kabul Monday as artillery fire gutted the city's historic blue mosque and casualties in 10 days of fighting soared to more than

400 dead and 4,500 injured. The Poul-e-Kheshti mosque in the centre of Kabul was set ablaze during fierce artillery duels, which began overnight and went on until early hours

Shells struck the ancient mosque, whose blue minarets have long dominated the skyline. It was not known whether any people were inside, but the building is usually occupied by worshippers.

The main Friday congregations were held at the mosque, a religious and cultural treasure and main attraction for visitors, with Afghan and foreign dignitaries often joining the

Another historical site, the Kabul museum, was earlierdestroyed in the factional fighting last year.

Sources said a coal storage in the Pule Mahmood area, near the blue mosque, also caught fire from a rocket, destroying 35,000 bags of coal Monday. Jets from the air forces of rivals Uzbek warlord Abdul

Rashid Dostum and President Burhanuddin Rabbani pounded each other's troops. One bomb landed inside the huge presidential palace and plumes of black smoke were rising from a section, witnesses said.

General Dostum, in collaboration with the troops of the Hezb-e-Islami chief, Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmaty-ar, launched an offensive 10 days ago to oust Mr. Rabbani, whose defence is led by Shoora-e-Nazaar forces commanded by former Defence Minister Ahmad Shah Masoud.

Gen. Dostum's militia and Mr. Hekmatyar's hardline Hezb-e-Islami forces tried to push north across the Kabul River in an assault on the Soviet-built Microrayon housing complex that was captured from Gen. Dostum by Rabbani

Much of the heavy shelling and rocketing had died down by Monday morning as both sides paused to re-equip for the next round, officials said.

But sporadic small arms and heavy machinegun fire rattled across the war-shattered city in hand-to-hand fighting along the frontline just south of the city centre.

Occasional bursts of heavy shelling and rocket fire erupted

throughout the morning. Wounded people took advantage of the pauses to make their way to the city's already overcrowded hospitals. which have treated more than 4,000 wounded. Hundreds of people are feared to have been killed but no exact death toll was available.

One rocket ploughed into the radio room of the International Committee of the Red Cross, one of the few remaining international aid organisations that has not pulled out of the devastated city.

Thousands of Kabul residents were fleeing along the main road east to Pakistan, many too poor to go further were sleeping in the open in the town of Jalalabad.

Shells hit Sarajevo as NATO ponders strikes

SARAJEVO (R) — Shells crashed into the centre of Sarajevo Monday while Western leaders pondering whether to launch air strikes to break the Serb stranglehold on the

Journalists based in the battered Holiday Inn reported deafening explosions as shells pounded downtown streets and buildings. In the past week 46 people have been killed.

The Bosnian capital, under siege since last April, sits in a valley, making it an easy target for Serb gunners on surrounding mountains.

After 21 months of war, pressure is growing for the West to take a tougher line on the siege of Sarajevo and to curb attacks on United Nations troops throughout the re-

U.S. President Bill clinton and French President Francois Mitterrand discussed possible air strikes on Serb forces in Bosnia at a North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) summit on Monday, a French spokesman said.

Presidential spokesman Jean Musitell said Mr. Mitterrand told fellow leaders that NATO must back its statements on former Yugoslavia with rapid action, noting that existing resolutions allowed for air strikes to protect peacekeepers.

Mr. Musitelli quoted Mr. Clinton as responding that the United States was prepared to accept a statement endorsing air strikes to break the stranglehold on Sarajevo provided all the allies accepted responsibil-

ity for the consequences. The other two warring sides, Muslims and Croats, continued to struggle for territory in central Bosnia as peace talks by their representatives in Bonn

went into a second day. At least six people died and more than 30 were wounded in fighting near Vitez on Sunday that began with an early morning Muslim offensive on the Croat enclave they have sur-

One person died and one was wounded on Monday as a fighting continued at a lower intensity. U.N. military spokesman Colonel Bill Aikman said there appeared to be no major changes on the front line.

Residents blamed troops for

There has been frequent

the bombing. Officials said

security forces had been re-

sponding to firing from Cudi.

friction, sometimes leading to

gunfire, between Cudi and a

nearby compound inhabited by

the families of village guards

paid by the state to fight the PKK.

Residents said last week the

guards had forced up to 350 of

the 1,000 families living in

An unnamed official quoted

by Milliyet newspaper on Mon-

day said people were leaving

Cizre because of PKK in-

It quoted Cizre Mayor

Hasim Hasimi as urging the

government to act to revive the

economy of the town, whose

lifeline trade with Iraq was

wrecked by U.N. sanctions.

The people of Cizre are still

hoping for peace and security," he said.

timidation.

Cudi to leave their homes.

In Bonn, peace talks between Bosnia's Muslim president, Alija Izetbegovic, and Croatian President Franjo Tudiman opened with a new map being circulated giving the Muslims just over a third of Bosnian territory.

The meeting was intended to approve a ceasefire to the fighting in central Bosnia between Zagreb-backed Bosnian Croat militia and the Bosnian government army.

Diplomats in Geneva where full-scale peace negotiations are due to resume on Jan. 18 said the map met the target, set by European Union ministers, of awarding a third of the republic's territory to Muslims

under an eventual peace plan. Talks on ending Bosnia's 21month-old civil war have often been accompanied by an increase in fighting as warring sides try to gain greater leverage at the negotiating table.

In central Bosnia, about 65,000 Croats have been trapped in the Lasva Valley since June, losing ground slowly but steadily to the more numerous and better organised Bosnian

Major Mike James, a British U.N. officer in the area, said the Bosnian army attacked Croat forces at four points in the Vitez pocket, with the thrust pointed at the village of Santici on the road east of

He said the offensive appeared to be aimed at cutting off the Croat supply route between Vitez and Busovaca, which the Croats have admitted they cannot afford to lose.

The fighting forced U.N. peacekeepers to close a major supply route into the area, where about 1.5 million civilians are dependent on aid.

International mediator Lord Owen said before the Bonn talks that a ceasefire in central Bosnia would be easier to conclude if progress could be made on political issues.

A Bosnian-Croat agreement is also seen as crucial to the Geneva talks.

But, before managing to leave Sarajevo on a flight delayed by shelling, Mr. Izetbegovic said he was pessimistic about the outcome of the Bonn

Mortar barrage kills five in Turkey

ANKARA (R) - An overnight mortar barrage killed five women and children in the mainly Kurdish town of Cizre in southeastern Turkey, officials and residents said on Mohday.

They said several people were wounded in the bombardment.

Unal Erkan, emergency rule

eastern city of Batman.

A senior official in Sirnak province said five people were killed when mortar bombs hit a house in Cizre's Cudi district, a stronghold of support for the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK). He said it was not clear

Heavy security was in force in the impoverished town of Cizre on Monday, with military helicopters flying over the town and armoured vehicles

the same residential district of

governor of 10 southeastern provinces hit by a Kurdish revolt, flew to Cizre, located on the Tigris river near the Syrian and Iraqi borders, to investi-

Security sources said two people had been shot dead in separate killings in the south-

whether Turkish troops or separatist PKK guerrillas had

launched the mortar barrage. Cizre residents said they heard mortar blasts, interspersed with shouting and wailing, for about 90 minutes in the early hours of Monday and said there was no apparent

return fire. "We were woken up in the middle of the night by a big explosion." one resident said. "We could hear shouts and cries until the blasts stopped at about three o'clock.'

Residents said three pregnant women and two children died when bombs struck their two-storey dwelling. The owner of the house and his son. who was on leave from the army, were seriously wounded. The son was taken to hospital in Diyarbakir.

patrolling the tense streets. Last week a baby and its parents were killed, four civilians were wounded and three houses badly damaged in a similar mortar barrage against

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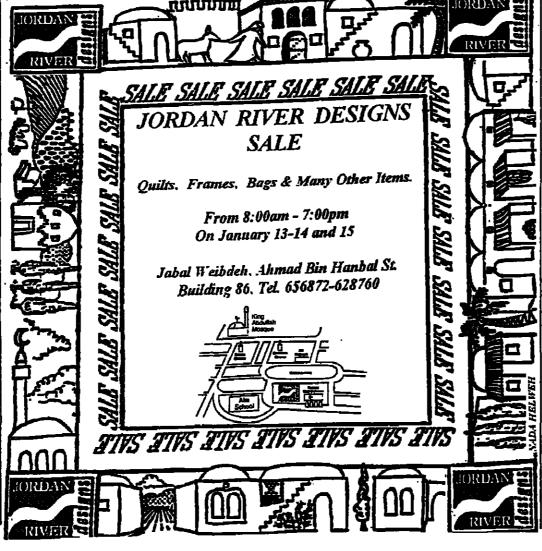
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Applicants must respond by January 18, 1994.



Arab Gulf funds to play key role in Palestinian development

. ;; ABU DHABI (AFP) — Aтаb a Gulf funds expect to play a key totale in reviving the battered meconomy of the Israeli-occurepied territories when they come under Palestinian rule in -line with a limited autonomy agreement.

The development funds in the six-nution Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) are in touch with the World Bank to # thalk out a mechanism for "*cooperation in pumping investof ment into the territories under --- \$2 billion world aid package. a Gulf official said Sunday.

Gulf and other Arab funds will play a pioneering role in financing development pro-:-jects in Palestine (occupied territories)." said Badr Mashallah, coordinator of the official 'Arab development funds.

They have been entrusted by their government with supervising the aid to be provided by Gulf states. They will also oversee the implementation of the projects in coordination with the World Bank," he told AFP in an

Saudi Arabia has pledged around \$100 million for the world package for Palestinians while Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have promised \$25 million each. Most of the remaining funds in the package will come from the United States, Japan and other industrial nations.

"The funds pledged by Gulf states are not final. It is just the first stage," Mr. Mashallah, a

Mr. Mashallah is in the UAE for annual talks of operations chiefs in Arab and other regional development funds. The talks opened Monday and will cover financing of new projects in Arab countries and other developing nations as well as cooperation with other

The meeting is attended by the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD), the Arab Monetary Fund, the Arab Bank for Development in Africa, OPEC

ment Fund and national funds in GCC states - Saudi Arabia. Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait. Oatar, and the UAE.

AFESD will present a report to the meeting on its financial operations in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, Mr. Mashallah said.

"AFESD has a long experience in financing development in Palestine. It will explain its experience so other funds will benefit in mapping out a joint policy for future operations there." he said.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), which signed with Israel the Sept. 13 autonomy accord for Gaza and the West Bank town of Jericho. has said it needs around \$11 billion until the year 2000 for reviving the eco-nomy, wrecked by 26 years of occupation.

The organisation has been suffering from its worst financial crisis due to a halt in aid by its main Gulf donors following of Kuwait. GCC states have extended the bulk of the nearly \$2.5 billion the PLO has received in Arab aid since 1979.

Figures provided by Mr. Mashallah showed total funds provided by the participants in Monday's talks stood at \$35.7 billion, of which around \$14.5 billion were given by Gulf funds. Total aid by GCC and other Arab governments has exceeded \$100 billion, he

"The funds are playing their role well in development in the Arab region. But economic difficulties have persisted in some Arab states because of mismanagement of funds. technical and manpower problems, political instability and other factors." he said.

He said Gulf funds did notchange their financial policies after the war but there has been a "geographical change in the distribution of money.

Mr. Mashallah, however, said financing plans for 1994 covered all Arab states.

Russian recession not yet over

MOSCOW (R) - Economic ills triggered by Russia's move to a market economy are not over yet and gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to contract by further five per cent this year, Interfax News levels. Agency said Monday.

The agency, quoting economics ministry officials, added that industrial production would fall by six per cent. while earnings would fall by between three and five per cent in real terms.

The gap between rich and poor would widen and unemployment would reach six to seven million people.

Government figures show that 728,000 people were registered unemployed in Octo-ber, but officials say the real number of jobless is much. much higher. The agency said preliminary

estimates showed that Russian gross domestic product, a broad measurement of goods and services, contracted by 12 per cent in 1993, GDP fell 18.5 per cent in 1992.

Interfax quoted the State Statistics Committee as saying that Russia's gross domestic product fell 11 per cent to 132 trillion roubles (\$103 billion) in the first 11 months of last year. compared to the same 1992

tourist target last year, expect

7.5 million visitors in 1994, its

"At a rough estimate, we will receive 7.5 million tourists

and earn a minimum of \$4.5

billion, or about 12 per cent up

on last year," Abdul Kadir

Ates told Reuters in an inter-

He predicted that the prop-

ortion of tourists from rich

industrialised countries would

Low-spending visitors from

eastern Europe and the former

Soviet Union accounted for 34

per cent of arrivals last year,

compared to nearly 50 per cent

Mr. Ates said advance bookings

from Europe were looking

quite healthy and he was trying to attract more tourists from

North America, the Pacific region and the Middle East.

Tourist earnings from 7.2

continue rising as in 1993.

tourism minister has said.

Production of consumer goods fell 12 per cent in the first 11 months of last year compared to previous year

Consumer price have risen nine-fold last year in comparison with an increase of 26 times in 1992, Russian Finance Minister Boris Fyodorov wrote in an article published in the daily Izvestia.

"Inflation still remains catastrophically high, and it's ridiculous to claim that we have carried out too tough a policy or a shock therapy (kind of) reform," Mr. Fyodorov said.

Economic performance could have been better. Mr. Fyodorov said if the government had not been forced to how to pressure from the old parliament for more state sub-

Mr. Fvodorov also claimed wages were growing faster than prices and real incomes rose by 10 per cent in 1993.

Criticis of the government say the success of Vladimir Zhirinovsky's ultranationalist party in the parliament election last month was the result of growing public frustration over painful price of the market reforms.

Turkey expects 7.5m

tourists in '94

Mr. Fyodorov said the De-

Foreign investment cember inflation rate of 12 per cent was a record low since the beginning of market reforms in in India January 1992. He also said the rouble had strengthened against the dollar, falling just 10 per cent since June. soars

Among other goals for 1994,

Mr. Fyodorov said he hoped

the government could bring

down inflation to five per cent

a month and achieve a rouble

rate of about 2,000-2,500 rou-

bles to a dollar by the end of

However, he said there were

fears communists and ultrana-

tionalists, two of the largest

blocs in the new Russian par-

liament, could force Yeltsin to

oust leading pro-reform minis-ters and backtrack on reforms.

slowing the pace of reforms would mean "disaster, con-tinuation of the time of strife

and betraval of Russia's

He said demands by the

communists and ultranational-

ists for more social spending

will only result in a price jump

of 20 times and a sharp drop in

Meanwhile. Foreign Trade

Minister Oleg Davydov said

Russia has the capacity to dou-

Russia exported \$1.2 billion worth of weapons in 1993.

"For political reasons we

have stopped supplies of

weapons to countries at war -

Afghanistan, Angola, Ethiopia and some others," Mr. Davy-

dov told TASS in an interview

anything for exports like that.

Now the whole system of arms

exports has been changed and

we export weapons for hard

currency only." he pointed

defence industries.

exports, he added.

"But Russia never received

ble its arms exports in 1994.

national interests.

the rouble.

Mr. Fyodorov warned that

NEW DELHI (AFP) - Fore ign investors have pledged \$4,3 billion to industrial projects in India since it opened up its huge market in August 1991, ending four decades of protectionism, the government said Monday.

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Some \$2.9 billion of that was committed in 1993, when overseas investment pledges more than doubled from the previous year, the industry ministry said in a year-end report released here. "More than 90 per cent of

the total investment have gone to high-priority and technological industries," the ministry

Those included power and elecommunications involving transfers of high technology which get a priority approval over manufacturers of consumer items ranging from Coca Cola to Ray Ban sunglasses which have appeared here.

But the industry ministry

acknowledged that actual investment flows since August 1991, when Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's government threw open the doors to foreign companies, had been a modest \$880 million. Of that, \$539 million dollars

came in during 1993. But officials said there was no reason for discouragement

because priority projects such as telecommunications involve a long gestation period between the point of government approval and fund flows. U.S. companies were the top

investors, followed by the Brit-Mr. Davydov said a new ish, Swiss and Japanese. company, Rosvooruzheniye. India's market was closed to was being set up to coordinate foreigners in the name of selfthe operations of Russian arms reliance for 44 years since it exporters and investment in

won independence from Brit-

The foreign trade ministry Profit repatriation was eased would remain responsible for and a majority shareholding licensing and controlling arms allowed for foreign companies.

ish rule in 1947.

UAE real estate sector booms

ABU DHABI (AFP) -- An economic upswing caused by higher government spending and a sharp decline in bank loan interest rates boosted investment in the real estate sector in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to record levels in 1993, dealers said Sunday.

Operations in the property sector, the biggest investment field in the UAE, were worth billions of dirhams (dollars) in 1993 while soaring demand pushed up rents by between 10 and 30 per cent.

The year 1993 saw a boom in activities related to construction and land trading," said Zuhair Kaswani, director of Al Sharhan Real Estate Centre. "Turnover is estimated at several billions of dirhams and it is the biggest since the UAE federation was established (in 1971)."

Dealers said the upturn was caused by soaring return from real estate investment, a steep

STOCKHOLM (AFP) - The

Swedish government plans to

cut unemployment in half by

1999 and reduce the deficit and

borrowing requirement signifi-

cantly, Finance Minister Anne

Wibble said Monday as she

presented the 1994-1995

budget proposal to parliament.

"I" If Sweden is to have good.

new jobs, and a reliable wel-

fare system, growth must be high and stable, inflation must

remain low, and the structural

reorganisation plan (approved

by parliament last spring) must

be seen though." she under-

In presenting the budget.

which had been leaked widely, Ms. Wibble painted a brighter

picture of the Swedish eco-

nomy than in years past,

announcing that growth, ex-

ports, industrial production

and investments are all ex-

"During 1994 growth will be slose to 2.5 per cent and nearly

three per cent the following

year. Thereafter, growth must

be around four per cent per

tear for 1996-1999 if we are to

reach the goals of cutting un-

employment in half and of

naving a reliable welfare sys-

In so doing, the number of

good, new jobs could increase

by 2.5 to three per cent per

Sweden's current unemploy-

ment level is the highest since

the 1930's. The number of job-

less workers amounts to 8.4

per cent of the workforce.

while another 6.4 per cent are

occupied on retraining and

other government schemes to

tem." Ms. Wibble said.

year, she predicted.

pected to rise quickly.

lined.

decline in loan interest rates and a business upswing due to high government expenditure. which stood at 17.6 billion dirhams (\$4.79 billion), the highest in nearly a decode.

Bank loan interests have plunged to between five and six per cent from more than 13 per cent three years ago while investment return in the real estate sector has exceeded eight per cent. This is much higher than interest rates on deposits of around three per cent and stocks of five to six

per cent.
"Another factor is a rush by investor from other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states into the real estate sector after a GCC summit decision to allow them to buy property

in the UAE," one dealer said. Dealers said high liquidity and the absence of other major investment opportunities also contributed to the construction

combat unemployment.

According to Ms. Wibble's

proposal, overall unemploy-

ment is expected to remain

high in 1994, but will decline

slightly in 1995. By 1999, the

government hopes to have cut

current unemployment figures

In addition, gross domestic product (GDP), which has de-

creased for three consecutive

years, is expected to climb

some two per cent in 1994 and

three per cent in 1995, due

mainly to a strong increase in exports after the devaluation

of the Swedish kronor in

Exports are expected to in-

crease by close to 11 per cent in

1994 and some seven per cent

in 1995. The strong rise in

exports is also expected to

bring an increase in industrial

investments in 1994 and 1995.

which rose some four per cent

last year due to more expen-

sive imports after the devalua-

tion, is expected to increase

this year by some 2.5 per cent

and by three per cent in 1995.

crease significantly in 1994-

1995, according to Ms. Wib-

(\$26 billion) for the current budget year 1993-1994, while

the borrowing requirement will amount to just over 271 billion

For the budget year 1994-

1995, the deficit is expected to

decrease to 172 billion kronor

(\$20.7 billion) and the borrow-

ing requirement to 220 billion

The deficit is expected to amount to 216 billion kronor

ble's new finance plan.

kronor (\$32.5 billion).

The budget deficit will de-

The consumer price index.

November 1992.

Liquidity rose to around 85 billion dirhams (\$23.1 billion) at the end of 1993 from 73 billion dirhams (\$19.8 billion) at the end of 1990.

A report by the Arab Cement Union said the UAE planned to invest more than \$1.5 billion in new construction and infrastructure projects.

It said this would enable the country's cement plants to make high profits after some of them suffered from losses due to a large decline in cement prices caused by excess supply and a fall in domestic demand. "The 1993 construction

boom has given birth to an active speculative market for dealing in land and commercial buildings." Mr. Kaswani told AFP. "Many investors made large profits due to a sharp increase in prices.

He said a sharp increase in demand for houses had prompted the UAE emirates Abu Dhabi. Dubai and Shariah to

kronor (\$26.5 billion).

Wibble told parliament.

*For growth to be stable, the

threat of a galloping national

debt must be eliminated," Ms.

She pointed out the public

sector's deficit of close to 200

billion kronor (\$24 billion), or

13.5 per cent of the GDP.

Sweden's is the fastest growing

OECD debt, when measured

"The structural reorganisa-

tion plan of 81 billion kronor

oot for high-rise towers given their relatively small area. Such towers were replacing small buildings, whose life has exceeded 20 years, with the aim of making higher profits,

Dealers said the opening of branches by several foreign companies and banks, a large increase in transit passengers and the upgrading of the communication network had also contributed to prosperity in the housing sector.

Mr. Kaswani said the high demand had pushed up land prices by 20 to 80 per cent while hotels recorded the busiest year in more than a

"In the next year, land prices are expected to grow further as demand for land and houses will continue to increase and trade and industrial activity gains momentum," he

realised as planned," Ms. Wib-

apothecary and the dentist.

State spending on dental insur-

ance and prescription medi-

cines will decrease by 1.2 bil-

lion kronor (\$144.5 billion) in

1995, Ms. Wibble announced.

education, home-language in-

struction, the building of war

shelters, and housing construc-

tion and renovations.

Other savings target adult

ble emphasised.

Swedish government focuses on halving unemployment by 1999

million visitors topped \$4 billion in 1993, when midsummer kidnappings and bomb attacks by Kurdish rebels scared off holidaymakers in droves and Swedes will feel the coninflicted revenues losses of besequences of the new budget tween \$500 million and \$1 billion, Mr. Ates said. most when visiting the

the year before.

He said the attacks had depressed demand considerably after June, but earnings had picked up from mid-September.

The Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) kidnapped at least 19 foreigners in eastern and southeastern provinces where it has been fighting a guerrilla war for independence since

ANKARA (R) — Turkey, hit 1984. by Kurdish guerrilla attacks on It a It also set off small bombs in Istanbul and the western seaside towns of Antalya and Kusadasi, killing one Turk and causing dozens of mostly minor injuries to Turks and fore-

> PKK spokesmen in Europe have again warned tourists not to visit Turkey, saying tourism earnings help fund what they call Ankara's "dirty war" against Kurds in the southeast.

Mr. Ates siad PKK violence was preventing economic develonment in the southeast. whose ancient sites, spectacular mountains and wild rivers he believed could lure up to 3.5 million tourists and inject \$1.5 billion a year into the local economy.

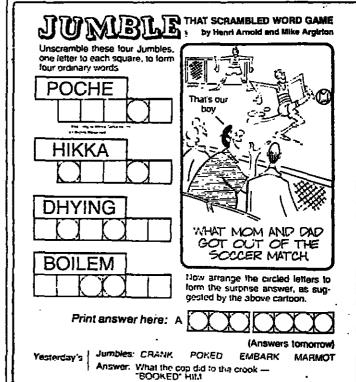
The ministry has prepared plans for tourist development all over the southeast, including ski resorts in Bingol and Hakkari province, where guerrillas and drug smugglers now

"This is the saddest part of the picture," he said. "Tourism has a great potential in that region when the killing stops."

Mr. Ates said delegations from Egypt, Israel and Turkey would meet in Cairo next week to complete the bylaws for the East Mediterranean Tourist Association they set up in November.

"This agreement sets an example of regional cooperation. It can help change the image of the Middle East, contribute to lasting peace and, in time, bring economic benefits," he

Horoscope not received



THE Daily Crossword by Kenneth Witte

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(\$9.75 billion) that parliament adopted last spring must be

Peanuts

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I'M READY, SIR .. RESEARCH SHOWS THAT IF A GIRL DOES NOT PARTICIPATE IN SPORTS BY THE TIME SHE'S TEN, SHE PROBABLY WON'T WHEN SHE'S THIRTY-FIVE.



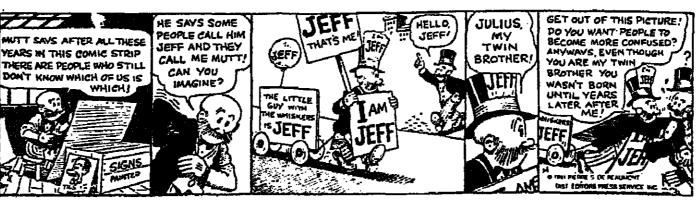




Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



the better half, By Glasbergen GLASBERGEN "You're drinking a toast to me with pizza grease? How dis-

gustingly comantic!"

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IN THE NEAR EAST

Lebanon's biggest share issue exceeds target

biggest-ever share offer closed Monday after raising well over its target of \$650 million for the Solidere company that will rebuild war-ruined central

Beirut. Officials of the \$1.8 billion Lebanese Company for the Development and Reconstruction of Beirut Central District (Solidere) said the issue was substantially oversubscribed. A company source said it may

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have raised up to \$1 billion. "We think it's a really excellent result. It's better than we expected, especially in terms of the number of people that have subscribed," said Nasser Chamaa, head of Solidere's board of founders.

The official result of the subscription has not yet been published but the issue was one of the biggest corporate flotations

ever made in the Middle East and a major success for the government of Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri.

"It means there's confidence in the country. It means we have really started the financial markets in Lebanon," said Mr. Chamaa, a close associate of

Trading in Solidere shares is expected to start in Beirut next month. Authorities say this will be the basis for a revived Beirut Stock Exchange that they plan to open later this

The project is billed as the biggest urban renewal development of the 1990s.

It is at the heart of Mr. Hariti's far-reaching plans for rebuilding Beirut's position as a regional financial and recreational centre and recapturing the pre-eminent stature the

Lebanese capital held before the 1975-90 civil war.

However, the flotation closed amid rumblings of discontent from Lebanon's Sunni Muslim clergy following con-demnation of the issue last month by a leading Shiite Muslim radical.

Sunni clerics demanded Sunday that Muslim religious property in the central district that was handed to Solidere by

parliament for reconstruction should be withdrawn from the company's control.

They said property donated to Muslim religious authorities could only be used in accordance with Sharia religious law and could not be alienated.

Last month Sheikh Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah, Lebanon's top pro-Iranian Shiite cleric, issued a decree banning investment in Solidere as a sin

because the company was empowered to take over property for redevelopment without the consent of owners.

Owners in the central district will receive Solidere shares in compensation under a law passed by parliament.

Solidere has so far declined to comment on the criticisms. Mr. Chamaa says it will start work by next June on reconstructing a 1.6 million square metres area devastated during

It will build hotels, offices, a financial district, seaside parks and tree-lined walks, replacing a swathe of shell-holed city blocks and overgrown streets destroyed in the war.

Banks reported a last-minute rush by small investors before the issue closed. The shares have been selling like hot cakes in the last few days," said a west Beirut bank manager. "Most has been in small amounts of \$5,000 or less. It has been better than we thought.

Another banker said he had been besieged by small investors asking for loans to enable

them to invest. Company officials have not yet given details of the results of the subscription, although Mr. Hariri announced last week that he has invested \$125 million from his personal fortune estimated at some \$5 bil-

The offer was restricted to Lebanese and non-Lebanese Arabs. Mr. Chamaa said Arab investment was substantial but the majority of shares would be in Lebanese hands. Money would be returned to some Arab investors because of the oversubscription, he added.

Qatar Steel Company reports rise in production, profit

DUBAI (R) — The Qatar Steel Company (QASCO) reported Monday a rise in 1993 production and a 44 per cent increase in profits compared

with the previous year. The Qatar News Agency quoted Power and Water Minister Ahmad Mohammad Ali Al Subai'e, who is also chairman of the mainly stateowned OASCO, as saying 1993

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"was one of the best years for the company...with the highest production and the highest profit."

He said that 1993 profits rose by 44 per cent from 1992. He did not provide figures, but QASCO had said that it recorded a 155 million Qatari riyal (\$43 million) profit in

QASCO, founded in 1974, is

70 per cent owned by the Qatari government, 20 per cent by Kobe Steel Ltd of Japan and 10 per cent by Tokyo Boeki Ltd.

Mr. Subai'e sida 1993 steel bars production at QASCO's Umm Said plant stood at 608.626 tonnes tonnes compared with 588,059 tonnes in 1992. He said 90 per cent of the production is exported.

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Mr. Subai'e siad QASCO has received a feasibility study and a market study for its expansion plans at Umm Said to boost output by 500,000 tonnes using existing plant and buy new equipment to boost capacity by a further 140,000

tonnes a year.

QASCO had contracted Japan's Mitsui to do the market study and India's Dastur

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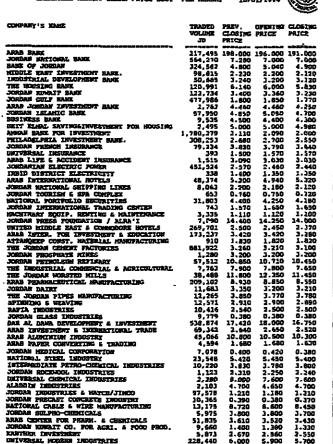
Mr. Subai'e said the project to expand the plant would cost about one billion rivals (\$275 million). The plan to purchase new equipment would cost an additional 150 million riyals

(\$41 million), he added. He said the company should finish considering the studies in the first quarter of 1994.

He said QASCO has received bids from eight companies for the plan to boost production and from five companies - from Japan, Italy and Germany — for the plan to boost capacity.

The QASCO plant and two million tonne per year Hadeed plant in Saudi Arabia steel production.

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U.S. Dollar in International I	Warkets	क्
Сигтепсу	New York Close Patr 7/1/1994	Tokyo C2o3€ Pm-10/1/1994
Sterling Pound	1.4930	1.4935
Deutsche Mark	1.7275	1.7252
Swiss Franc	1.4660	1.4651
French Franc	5.8828	5.8885**
Japanese Yen	111.85	111,73
European Curreny Unit	1.1220	1.1214**

USD Per STG

Сигтепсу	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTH
U.S. Dollar	3.03	3.18	3.34	3.68
Sterling Pound	5.18	5.31	5.25	5.00
Deutsche Mark	6.00	5.75	5.46	5.12
Swiss Franc	3.93	3.61	3.72	3.53
French Franc	6.37	6.06	5.81	5.43
Japanese Yen	2.34	2.06	1.87	1.81
European Currency Unit	6.43	6.18	5.93	5.43

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Precious I			•	Date: 1	
Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm°	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	387 75	7.40	Silver	4.88	0.110

Countral	Rank	of	Jordan	Exchange	Rate	Bulletin	
				_			10/1/1994

Сигтерсу	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.7040	0.7060
Sterling Pound	1.0504	1.0557
Deutsche Mark	0.4074	0.4094
Swiss Franc	0.4799	0.4823
French Franc	0.1196	0.1201
Sapanese Yen*	0.6298	0.6329
Dutch Guilder	0.3643	0.3661
wedish Krona	4****	****
talian Lira ²	0.0416	0.0418
Selgian Franc	****	*****

Per 180				
Other Currencies	Date: 10/1/1994			
Систепсу	Bid	Offer		
Bakraini Dinar	1.8450	1.8750		
Lebanese Lira*	0.040585	0.04177		
Sandi Riyal	0.1873	0.1882		
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3100	2.3650		
Qatari Riyal	0.19078	0.19203		
Egyptian Pound	0.2050	0.2200		
Omani Riyai	1.1795	1.8220		
UAE Dirham	0.19078	0.19203		
Greek Drachma*	0.2765	0.3225		
Cypriot Pound	1.3300	1.3825		

Cypriot Pound Per 190

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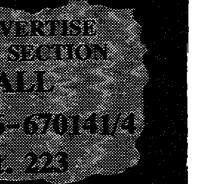
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S. Africa police raid hostel after journalist killed

JOHANNESBURG (Agencies) - Police raided a migrant workers hostel in Johannesburg's battle-scarred Katlehong township Monday following the killing of a journalist by gunmen who attacked an ANC peace mission near it Sunday.

Police spokesman Deon Peens said police arrested a man, seized an R5 rifle. ammunition, 31 petrol bombs. a home-made handgun, marijuana and a bundle of forged

South African bank notes. The search of Mazibuko Hostel began at 4:30 a.m. (0230 GMT) and lasted just over three hours, he said.

Witnesses said gunmen at the hostel killed photographer Abdul Shariffe. 31, and wounded two other journalists in the attack on the party, which included ANC General-Secretary Cyril Ramaphosa and Communist Party leader Joe Slovo.

Police Brigadier Zirk Gous said evidence indicated the attack was launched from the

The officials were visiting Katlehong to try to drum up support for a campaign to quell fighting between so-called selfdefence units.

ANC leader Nelson Mandela, speaking on national television Sunday night, said the situation in Katlehong, one of South Africa's most violent townships, could not be allowed to continue.

"We cannot allow a situation where a hostel has now become a centre of the most blatant criminal act," he said, Mr. Mandela said he would meet President F.W. De Klerk on Tuesday to put forward proposals on ending the vio-

Hosokawa

aims for

vote on

reforms

on Jan. 19

TOKYO (Agencies) -

Japan's ruling coalition will aim for a final parliamentary

vote on political reforms on

Jan. 19 and tackle the coun-

try's recession with a fresh

stimulative package the next

day, coalition officials said

Top government spokesman Masayoshi Takemura told a

news conference however that

wrangling within the coalition

over how to finance a tax cut

could delay the economic

The package is widely ex-

pected to include hefty cuts in

income taxes, long awaited in

The Socialist Party, the big-

gest party in the coalition, opposed raising the controver-

sial sales tax to pay for the cuts, as suggested by other

a timetable Monday for enact-

ing Prime Minister Morihiro

Hosokawa's package of politic-

led in the upper house of par-liament since November be-

cause of delaying tactics by the

opposition Liberal Democratic

hold expert public hearings on

the package on Jan. 17 and 18

before a final vote on Jan. 19,

officials said. Such hearings are

a prerequisite for voting in the

special committee and plenary

The LDP and the other

opposition party, the Com-

munists, have not agreed on

the schedule. But the coalition

has threatened to put it to a

vote in the house where it

holds a majority.

The reforms include provi-

sions for streamlining electoral

districts and imposing strict

penalties on corrupt politi-

cians. Many of the measures

have been under debate for as

was room for minor compromise with the LDP over the

package, but major issues such

as a blanket ban on political

donations by private firms

The pro-business LDP

would lose its main source of

funds if the reforms are

LDP President Yohei Kono

told a television talk show at

the weekend that his party

would no longer boycott ses-

sions, as they have done in the

last few weeks. The tactic has

be ready to meet Mr. Hosoka-

wa in the run-up to the final

Mr. Kono also said he would

Mr. Hosokawa is planning to

visit China on March 20 and

21. The Mainichi Shimbun dai-

been much criticised.

ly reported Monday.

would remain unchanged.

Coalition officials said there

long as five years.

enacted.

The coalition decided to

The reforms have been stal-

Coalition leaders decided on

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package.

"We have specific proposals to make," Mr. Mandela said, without giving details. "If he (De Klerk) does not act on that, South Africa is facing a

Police said Sunday night they had shot dead a gunman and captured three more. although they were not sure that they were the men who attacked the ANC party.

The ANC Monday reacted angrily to reported comments by Martinus Van Schalkwyk, spokesman for the ruling National Party, that the orga-nisation had provoked its opponents by visiting Katle-

hong.
"The ANC leadership went there on a peace mission to acquaint themselves with the horrific circumstances under which residents live and to show our solidarity with them." ANC spokesman Carl

Niehaus told reporters.

"Only a party that does not care for the lives of black peoole can issue such statements. Mr. Niehaus said.

Political violence in Katlehong and neighbouring Tokoza claimed at least half of the 3,000 lives lost last year in South Africa in feuding between rival groups.

Police say most of the fighting in the areas is caused by turf wars between supporters of the ANC and those of the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party, many of whom live in the workers' hostels.

The ANC's Ronnie Mamoepa said the volatile situation in Katlehong was being referred to the multiparty Transitional Executive Council, which meets in Pre-

Mr. De Klerk Monday expressed shock at the death of the journalist in the black township Sunday and said the country's standing probe into violence would investigate the

In a statement issued by his office. Mr. De Klerk said he had been informed that Judge Richard Goldstone, who heads a standing commission of in-quiry into violence which bears his name, would investigate the attack.

Mr. De Klerk said he "strongly supports such an investigation, especially in the light of contradictory interpretations of the role of the South African police." The African National Con-

gress blamed the police for the incident, saving it failed to provide proper protection for the much-publicised tour by the ANC secretary-general and the South African Communist Party chief.

But Brigadier Gous shrugged off the protests, citing the rapid reaction of the security forces and saying the ANC had never asked the police for pro-

Mr. De Klerk said he would discuss the attack with Mr. Mandela at a meeting in Pretoria Tuesday.

In the wake of the killings. Mr. Mandela told South African television Sunday he had proposed measures to end the violence in a phone call to Mr. De Klerk.

Between May and December, 1,200 people were killed in townships east of Johannesburg, accounting for more than toll of 4,000 last year.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Kraychuk invited to Yeltsin-Clinton talks

MOSCOW (AFP) - Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk has been invited to join a summit meeting between U.S. President Bill Clinton and Russian leader Boris Yeltsin after Moscow and Kiev reached an agreement in principle on the future of Ukraine's nuclear arsenal, the Kremlin announced Monday. Mr. Yeltsin's press service said the Russian leader had invited Mr. Kravchuk to Friday's summit after reaching an "agreement in principle on certain important issues of shared interest, including nuclear weapons." A presidential spokesman declined to elaborate on the agreement, but Mr. Clinton has previously said that he would only meet with Mr. Kravchuk after an accord had been finalised on the dismantling of Ukraine's nuclear arsenal. Mr. Yeltsin's spokesman would only say that discussions were underway concerningseveral documents that the three leaders would be signing during their meeting in Moscow. On Sunday, a senior U.S. official said that Russia and Ukraine were "very close" to an agreement on the dismantling of Kiev's nuclear weapons. which were inherited from the old Soviet Union and are a source of bitter tension between both countries.

NATO offices in Rome bombed

ROME (AP) - A small bomb went off early Monday in an office complex and shattered windows of nearby NATO offices. No one was reported injured. A two-day NATO summit was to start Monday in Brussels, Belgium. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the explosion, which occured around 1 a.m. in the Mussolini-era complex, and there were no suspects. In a statement released by his office here. Premier Carlo Ciampi said the explosion showed that "terrorists and enemies of freedom are always waiting in ambush and that the free Atlantic alliance continues to be a great bulwark against their designs." Mr. Ciampi was in Brussels for the summit. The ANSA news agency said the bomb went off in a garden which gives access to offices of a NATO defence college. The blast left a 1-metre crater.

Bhutto family feud continues

KARACHI (AFP) - Another Pakistani political activist died Monday, after being shot by police, increasing the death toll from the powerful Bhutto family's political feud. Shahid Rind, 26, had received a bullet in the back while talking to Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's estranged mother Nusrat Bhutto during a bloody clash last Wednesday which marred the 66th birth anniversary celebrations of the late Premier Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Mr. Rind's death brought the unofficial toll from the incident to four, although police maintain that this was only the second fatality. But Nusrat, 65, reiterated Monday that two others were killed when police cordoned off her ancestral home Al Murtaza in Larkana, about 340 kilometres north of here, and opened fire. Their bodies were removed by the police before they could be identified, she said.

U.K. minister quits after wife's death

LONDON (AFP) - Junior British Transport Minister Lord Caithness has resigned following his wife's sudden death. Downing Street announced. The resignation is the third to hit the government of British Prime Minister John Major since Wednesday. Lord Caithness, 45, minister for aviation and shipping, announced he wanted to spend more time with his son and daughter after he discovered the body of his wife. Diana. Saturday afternoon in the family home in Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, west of London. Police said late Sunday 'No-one is being sought in relation to this tragic death, which is now a matter for the coroner." Unofficial sources said she had committed suicide. Environment Minister Tim Yeo, married with two grown children, was forced to resign Wednesday after revelations that he had had a child in an illicit affair. In another ethics controversy. Conservative MP Alan Duncan, 36. Saturday resigned as personal private secretary to Junior Health Minister Brian Mawhinney, a post to which he had only recently been named.

Rebels guard Gamsakhurdia's body

TBILISI (AP) - Armed supporters of former president and rebel leader Zviad Gamsakhurdia are guarding his grave at a secret location in western Georgia, Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze said Monday. "Nobody can be sure exactly where the body is, but the place we believe it is buried is controlled by a group of his armed followers." Mr. Shevardnadze said in his weekly radio address. The location of Gamsakhurdia's body has been a mystery since his widow announced last week that he had committed suicide on New Year's Eve after being surrounded by pro-government troops.



An Australian firefighter smiles under the falling rain as light showers gave some 10,000 firelighters the first sign of relief in their battle against sierce fires threatening the population of Sydney suburbs (AFP photo)

Rain helps hard-pressed Australian firefighters

SYDNEY (AFP) - Light rain fell here Monday giving fire-fighters at least a brief respite in their battle against bush fires which have left four dead and a trail of destruction in New South Wales, fire authorities said.

The rain and cooler conditions helped the firefighters contain most of the 136 fires still burning throughout the state and provided the chance to backburn defensive fire

But Bush Fire Services Commissioner Phil Koperberg forecast worse conditions later this week and warned that the trouble was far from over.

"We are not going to experience severe conditions today and tomorrow but on Wednesday and Thursday the weather bureau expects horrific conditions," Mr. Koperberg said.

"Everything is under control but the fires are not out. The difference could depend on a quick change of temperature and wind.

Two major fires were still blazing in the Blue Mountains west of Sydney and on the central coast, north of here, but several other blazes were the time being.

The toll of homes confirmed destroyed or damaged remained at Sunday's total of

Arsonists have been blamed for starting many of the fires still raging in the state.

For the last two days, fire

authorities have been using specially equipped naval Sea Hawk helicopters among their fleet of 47 aircraft fighting the

The anti-submarine Sea Hawks, usually operated from RAN guided missile frigates. were fitted with huge waterbuckets attached to the winch.

A navy spokesman said following successful trials Sunday more similarly-equipped Sea Hawks and Sea King helicopters would join the fight. Firemen in the Blue Mountains paused briefly to attend the funeral of their colleague volunteer firefighter Norm Anthes, 45, who was killed when a tree fell on him after a fire at Mount Horrible near Bathurst west of here Wednesday.

Meanwhile, government offices, businesses, public utili-ties and insurance companies announced a variety of mea-sures to help people whose homes had been damaged or destroved.

Prime Minister Paul Keating announced that disaster relief payments to families left homeless by the bushfires would be more than trebled from \$600 to \$2,000.

Australian media tycoon Kerry Packer and his companies will contribute \$3 million to a fund to help victims. The Channel 9 television network approunced.

Police announced Monday that three young men had been arrested after being spotted by an off-duty constable lighting a fire in a bushy median strip on a road in Sydney's outer west

A police spokesman said the three, two aged 18 and one 19, with breaching the New South Wales Bush Fire Act. At least 11 people, including

four youths camping on the state's north coast, have already been issued with court appearance notices for allegedlighting fires during a prohibited period.

Two others have been charged with arson-related offences in relation to other fires. neither of which were major bushfires.

Meanwhile, the New Zealand government Monday said it would donate \$560,000 to an appeal for the victims of Australia's bushfires. Foreign Minister Don

McKinnon said the government would give the money to an appeal set up by the New Zealand branches of the International Lions Club.

MOSCOW (AFP) - Russian President Boris Yeltsin announced Monday that he was streamlining the government, axing two of the six posts of deputy prime minister, without specifying whose jobs would go in the reshuffle.

The presidential decree, issued on the eve of the opening of the new parliament, called on Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin to propose candidates to the different posts within a week.

The number of deputy prime ministers would be cut from six to four and the number of first deputy premiers from three to

Following the Dec. 12 general elections — seen as a set-back for the pro-reform Russia's Choice party -- Mr. Yelt-sin said a major revamping of the government was necessary. as the government "had not worked hard_enough.

Meanwhile, a military tribunal trying 12 former Soviet hardliners responsible for the August 1991 coup against then President Mikhail Gorbachev. Monday called for an official medical check-up on two of the accused who have repeatedly held up the trial because of

alleged health problems.

Monday's scheduled court ession was adjourned after five minutes on the grounds that former Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov and former parliamentary speaker Anatoly Lukyanov were not well enough to attend.

The court demanded official nedical confirmation of their ailments before the hearing reames Wednesday.

Mr. Pavlov, who suffers from high blood pressure, is in hospital after undergoing surgery, according to Court President Anatoly Ukolov. Mr. Lukyanov is ill at home.

according to his lawyer, but he had been seen attending political meetings this past week, ahead of the opening of parliament of which he is a member. The trial opened on April 14, but has failed to make

munist North Korea is likely to

resume talks with Seoul soon

in a bid to resolve an inter-

Korean row over nuclear in-

spections, South Korea's Uni-

fication Minister Lee Yung-

North Korea would soon

realise North-South talks on

nuclear inspections have to re-

sume, along with separate

U.S.-North Korean negotia-

tions, Mr. Lee told a South

Korean parliamentary com-

"Pyongyang will soon recog-

nise Seoul and Washington's

position on mutual nuclear in-

spections...to implement the

South-North non-nuclear dec-

laration will not change, even

as Pyongyang-Washington

negotiations improve," Mr.

He said it would be likely

there would be an exchange of

special envoys to settle North

Lee said.

Dug said Monday.

Seoul expects to resume

SEOUL (Agencies) - Com- Korea's nuclear problem,

talks with Pyongyang

Yeltsin announces Pope granted remission government reshuffle

Russia's first post-Soviet

parliament, a mishmash of

right-wing extremists, old-

guard Communists and frac-

tious reformers, holds its inau-

gural session Tuesday, laun-

ching what is widely expected

to be a new centre of resistance

Soviet-era legislature blasted

by government tanks amid a

rebellion in October, the new

Federal Assembly will be

forced to abide by a new constitution that grants Mr. Yelt-

sin a clear upper hand over his rivals in the legislature.

The election of a speaker,

his deputies and heads of par-

liamentary commissions was to

top the agenda at the first

session. But the main reformist

faction, Russia's Choice, has already clashed with opposi-

tion parties over the key issues.

of informal negotiations for the

speaker's chair last week.

charging that the ultranational-

ist Liberal Democratic Party,

the Communist Party and the

Agrairian Party were plotting

to take over key parliamentary

In another development that

cast a cloud over the scheduled

session, Mr. Yeltsin's office

announced Saturday that the

Russian leader had yet to de-

cide if he would address the

Federal Assembly, either at a

joint session or in separate sittings, as outlined in the con-

A provision in the new char-

ter that the session of the

Duma must be opened by the

oldest deputy favoured the LPD. Which was to have 68-

Last-minute talks were still

underway to decide on a venue

for the session of the 450-seat

State Duma, the lower house,

and the 178-strong Federation

Council, the upper chamber. A

spokesman for the Press Ser-

vice of the Federal Assembly

said deputies might be invited

to the Kremlin to hold their

which in turn would lead to

closer inter-Korean ties and

The two Koreas, still tech-

nically at war since the 1950-53

Korean conflict, reached

agreement in December 1991

to ban nuclear arms from the

Korean peninsula and allow

inspections of each other's faci-

But negotiations on im-

plementing the agreement

This breakdown of talks

over bilateral inspections has

since been overshadowed by

Pyongvang's wider disagree-ment with the International

Atomic Energy Agency

(IAEA) over allowing its in-

spectors into Pyongyang's

plants. South Korea and its

Western allies fear the North is

close to building a nuclear

homb, a charge Pyongyang de-

failed to make progress,

cooperation.

lities.

committees.

stitution.

Russia's Choice pulled out

But contrary to the old

to President Boris Yeltsin.

ROME (R) - Mehmet Ali 3 Agca, the Turk sentenced to life imprisonment for shooting Pope John Paul, has received more than a year in remission for good behaviour, Italian State Television reported. Agea, who shot the Pope in St Peter's Square on May 13, 1981 will now be available for parole in the year 2004. Held at a maximum security jail. Agea had his sentence reduced by over two years in 1989. Agca's lawyers are currently seeking a publisher for his autolography entitled I, Jesus Christ.

Turk who shot

'Supernatural' tree uproots road project

KUALA LUMPUR (R) — A 100-year old bo tree once housed in a Hindu temple is drawing hundreds of awed Malaysians after a crane trying to uproot it overturned, residents said Monday. Businessman P. Balakrishnan told Reuters by telephone the tree, holding up construction of a \$25 million highway project in Malaysia's southern Johor state, is believed to have supernatural powers. He said prayers have to be held before the tree can be felled. It was left standing stripped of its branches after the temple was shifted to make way for the road. The tree did not budge when the crane, capable of lifting a 30-tonne load, tried to pull it down and then overturned, the New Strains Times newspaper reported Monday. The crane's driver has had nightmares of being attacked by cobras and has refused to work at the site. Crowds have year-old Georgy Lokhava, an unknown philosophy professor, take the podium. been gathering around the tree, snarling traffic. Some offered eggs and milk to cobras, said to be living in a hole near the tree. Others seek signs to help them choose lottery numbers, the newspaper said. Hindus believe some spirits make their homes in trees and Hindu deity Lord Shiva wears a cobra around his neck.

Have briefcase, will travel

SEOUL (R). - South Korea plans to abolish its ban on overseas tourist travel for government officials, a news teport said Monday. The Joons Ang Daily News said the morale of civil servants would be greatly litted if the govern ment ban on foreign holidays was lifted. There was no official government confirmation. There is no explicit law banning overseas travel for government officials, but civil servants were last year "advised" to refrain from going abroad for holidays or on honeymoons as part of the government's frugality campaign and in a bid to cut the nation's tourism de-

Twin says he served time for brother

VENTURA, California (AFP) A man who impersonated his twin brother says he voluntarily served jail terms for his sibling. But authorities discovered the scam after the brother got into trouble again. "I took my brother's place because he had all these problems," said Donald Anderson of his identical 43-year-old twin, Ronald. Donald told the Los Angeles Times. "My brother has never been in jail for a long time. I've been in jail. I could handle it." While Donald was taking Ronald's place in jail last July, authorities became suspicious when Ronald was accused of spouse abuse. Donald was released and Ronald was sentenced Wednesday to 14 years in prison for attempted murder. Spousal battery and robbery.

"The judge asked me why I did this. And I said my twin needed help," Donald said. Donald said he also served his brother's six-month army hitch in South Korea in the 1970s. Becoming a crew chief in a helicopter unit.

Boy scares off car thieves with toy gun

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) A 12-year-old boy used a toy gun to scare off a pair of thieves trying to steal his mother's car in the parking lot of a shopping centre, police here said Wednesday. The boy's mother, who was not identified, had just finished putting her groceries in the trunk of the BMW when two men lunged at her and took the car keys. They were about to drive off with the car when the teenager threatened them with the toy gun and they took off

Church leader offers to mediate in Mexico revolt

SAN CRISTOBAL DE LAS CASAS, Mexico (R) - A controversial church leader, agreed Sunday to a rebel request to mediate in talks to end a peasant uprising in southern Mexico as a weekend hombing spree appeared to carry the revolt to the capital.

Samuel Ruiz, the Catholic bishop of San Cristobal De Las Casas in the conflict zone of southernmost Chiapas state, said he believed Guatemalan Nobel laureate Rigoberta Menchu would also join in the mediation effort, as requested by the

Of his own role in the possible talks, Bishop Ruiz said he agreed to take part "given the pain of our people caused by the events that have shaken

More than 100 people have been killed since rebels calling themselves the Zapatista National Liberation Army launched their uprising on New Year's Day by seizing six towns in the impoverished state.

Several bombs exploded in. the Mexico City area over the weekend after the rebels threatened to take their fight to the capital. One person was injured by a car bomb explo-

Bombs exploded near a communications tower in Chiapas Sunday night and explosions damaged an electrical tower in the state of Mexico near the capital, the Mexican News Agency. Notimex, re-

No one claimed responsibility for the explosions.

Notimex did not say whether the communications tower of television Azpeca had been damaged after two sets of bombs exploded in the area near Tenejapa at 9 p.m. local time (0300 GMT).

Nor did it describe the extent of damage at the Federal Electric Commission Tower in Texcoco in the state of Mexico. Three explosions occurred near the tower at 30 minute intervals early Sunday afternoon. Notimex said. The Zapatistas faxed offers

to begin a public dialogue to Mexican news organisations Friday and requested the mediation of Bishop Ruiz, Mr. Menchu and Julio Scherer, editor of the respected Mexican weekly news magazine Pro-ceso. Scherer could not be reached for comment.
"We ask them to respond

publicly to our offer... and mediate in the dialogue between the poor people in their struggle and their executioners," the fax said, according to published reports.

There are glimmers of hope

for a peaceful resolution." Bishop Ruiz said in his Sunday homily. He later told reporters that it

was Ms. Menchu - a Mayan Indian who won the 1992 Nobel Peace - who first informed him of the rebel call for his mediation effort and said he believed she too would participate.

From the tenor of the conversation my impression was that Rigoberta Menchu was happy... She was euphoric about this," Bishop Ruiz said. The government, which has demanded the rebels renounce

violence and lay down their

arms, had no immediate com-President Carlos Salinas De Gortari named a commission Saturday to "facilitate dialogue with the diverse sectors" in Chiapas, site of the biggest

uprising in Mexico in more than 20 years. It was unclear whether the commission would have the authority to negotiate with the Zapatistas. But commission member Eduardo Robledo, a senator for the ruling Institu-tional Revolutionary Party.

would not rule this out. "We will be in communication with whoever asks for us." Sen. Robledo said in response to a question about contacts with the guerrillas.
The Defence Ministry said in

a statement that an army base on the outskirts of this colonial Chiapas City had come under sporadic rebel rifle fire for the eighth day running Sunday but that the attackers had been repelled.

Government troops in the town of Ocosingo, a scene of statement said.

heavy fighting in the first days of the uprising, had also been harassed by sniper fire, the It revealed one more military death, raising the official toll of troops, rebels and civi-

lians killed in the fighting so far

to 103. The ministry said 61

rebels have been killed, a fi-

gure that has not varied for the last four days,

Bishop Ruiz, 69, has fought relentlessly over the last 34 years for the rights of Chiapas' indigenous peoples, attacking the power of local runchers and condemning persistent human rights abuses by the army and

But critics, including some who brand him "the red hishop," say he has gone too far, effectively becoming a political activist linked to groups involved in a series of land invasions and allegedly behind the insurrection.

Some of Bishop Ruiz's

priests and lay preachers scattered around the conflict zones of Chiapas have been accused by the government of partici-pating directly in the guerrilla campaign Bishop Ruiz dismisses the claims. Meanwhile, a Guatemalan

rebel leader, in Mexico City for peace talks with the Guatemalan government, denied any links between Guatemalan guernillas and the peasant re-volt. Notimex said Sunday.

"These are false declarations to create disinformation and a climate of confusion." Rodrigo Asturias, a commander of the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unit (UNRG), was quoted as saying.

Representatives from the UNRG and the Guatemalan government began a meeting in Mexico City Thursday nimed at restarting formal negotiations to end a 33-year civil conflict that has taken an estimated 100,000 lives.

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Edberg wins Qatar Open title

missio Sweden's Stefan Edberg clintalia ched his first title for nine one months Sunday when he pe in houshed aside Holland's Paul lay is Haarbuis in the final of the able is cover Open Tennis Tournely Qatar Open Tennis Tourna-Held ment 6-3, 6-2 in a one-sided

ity in final.

reduce Edberg, the world No. 5 and 1980 the No. 3 seed here, took just the No. 3 seed here took just the No. 3 seed here. for be Dutchman, ranked at 42 in the l. less world, to clinch the \$71,000

> Haarhuis, who beat No. 4 seed Goran Ivanisevic of Croatia in the semifinals, went away with \$42,000 after only his second appearance in a major final.

() _ A Edberg hadn't won a title e one since the Madrid clay court mple, crown in April. But he said the awe victory was a timely boost to e trying his chances of lifting his third id, resi Australian Open title when the usines Grand Slam tournament gets on Melbourne on on of "It's a

on of "It's a good sign winning of there," Edberg said. The Swede said that despite e super his recent drought of titles, he e said never lost hope that he would before win again, adding "Now it's It was important for me to keep my

of a fitness and concentration." iple was He also said he was confifor the dent because even though he t bude was not winning a competition able of "I was always playing well. I ined was waiting for it to happen. I n mer kept working hard, winning into today is a relief."

Háarhuis said that in his



Runner-up Paul Haarhuis (left) receives his Qatar Open trophy from Ali Al Fardan, head of

the Oatar Tennis and Squash Federation. Harbuis lost in the final to Swede Stefan Edberg

opinion Edberg is still one of the top players in the world. "He's still world class. He has a chance to win in Austra-

lia," said the Dutchman. The final was controlled by Edberg from start to finish. He gained the only break of the first set in the eight game and

went on to win in 34 minutes. He won a further two breaks in the second to race into a 4-0 lead before his opponent staged a late rally. But it was too late for the dispirited

"I would have liked to have got a draw," jocked Haarhuis. "I tried to go past him, through him and even over him, but

nothing worked." The year-ending ATP World Championship, staged indoors in Frankfurt in November, could be held in the Gulf Arab

state of Qatar in 1996. The Qatar Tennis and Squash Federation said Sunday it had been in contact with the ATP over staging the tourna-

NEWS IN

Seles comeback imminent — Shriver

SYDNEY (R) - Monica Seles is likely to return to top-level

tennis within the next four to seven weeks, according to

said she had spoken to Seles before Christmas and revealed

the former world number one had known at least a fortnight

ago she would not be travelling to the Australian Open later

this month. "The obvious time for her to return is between

mid-Feb and mid-March, before the Lipton Championship,"

said Shriver, agreeing that the Virginia Slims of Chicago

tournament starting on Feb. 7 was the earliest a Seles comeback could be expected. "When I spoke to her, she knew

she wouldn't play here ... To miss nine months and then start

with a Grand Slam would have been tough. She'll probably

make a decision about which tournament to enter four of five

days before the event." Shriver said the women's game had

greatly missed Seles since the stabbing incident in Germany

last April which has kept her sidelined ever since. After losing

in three sets to fellow American Kimberly Po in the first round

of the New South Wales Open, Shriver also said her own days

as a singles player were numbered. "I can see the finish line."

she said. "It's just a dilemma to say when the end will come."

DOHA (AFP) — The professional tennis ruling body has demanded that Boris Becker substantiate claims that drug

abuse is widespread in the game. Association of Tennis

Players Executive Vice President Larry Scott said here Sunday

that the German tennis star would be queried sometime in the

next two weeks over the claims. Scott, speaking at the Doha

ATP Tournament, said he was "shocked" by Becker's

outburst. The former Wimbledon champion could be sanc-

tioned if he fails to provide proof. Becker told the Frankfurter

Allgemeine Zeitung newspaper in December that he believed

cocaine, amphetamines and marijuana were widely used by

players. He said the fact that no player had been punished was

"a joke." The player is currently taking a two week break from the tour as his first child is expected later this week. But

the ATP vice president said a transcript of the interview was

already being studied and that Becker would be interviewed.

"Our chief executive Mark Miles will talk to Becker and give

him the chance to substantiate the allegations," said Scott.

Becker faces sanctions

Women's Tennis Association President Pam Shriver. Shriver

ment which features the world's top eight players. The contract between the ATP and Frankfurt expires in

November 1995. Ali Al Fardan, head of the Oatar Federation, said the ATP wanted the tournament to be played outdoors and that the climate in Qatar in November would be ideal.

"We are in serious discussions with the ATP and we are hopeful that we can reach a

BRIEF

Pele reiterates friendly tone to Havelange

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) -Soccer legend Pele continued to offer an olive branch to FIFA president and fellow Brazilian Joao Havelange, praising him in an interview despite being banned from the World Cup draw last month.

"It's a goal I didn't make," Pele said in an interview Sunday in Rio daily Jornal Do Brasil. "It hasn't change my life one bit."

Pele, who played for the North American Soccer League's New York Cosmos from 1975-78 in the United States and worked to bring the World Cup to America, was barred from the official draw ceremony in Las Vegas by Havelange because of a dispute between Pele and Havelange's son-in-law, Brazilian Federation President Ricardo

Pele accused Teixeira in a November interview in the Brazilian edition of Playboy magazine of demanding a million-dollar bribe to award television rights to the Brazilian National Championship to Pele's sports promotion com-

"Pele's accusations against my son-in-law hurt me deep-

Havelange said. Teixeira has sued Pele for libel, but Pele's lawyers said they had proof of the bribe charges they will present in

In Sunday's interview, Pele reiterated his statements made on draw day that he was not angry with Havelange, praising his administration of FIFA.

"Havelange is a successful administrator because he does business transactions open, for everyone to see," he said.
"Havelange has made FIFA a winner with his honesty." Pele was barred from the

draw despite media criticism of Havelange and even internal pleas by FIFA and World Cup USA officials to allow Pele to be part of the draw. On a related matter, Pele said he was saddened by a wider corruption scandal of

"The guilty must be tried and convicted," he said. "The reputation of Brazilian soccer

The Rio Soccer Federation in December was rocked when referees charged a national championship qualifying game had been rigged and that they were instructed to "fix" games

in the 1994 city championship. The Rio referee director was suspended and Rio games were removed from the national soccer lottery. Police are investigating charges that up to 17 referees participated as a "shock troop" in rigging games as directed by the administra-

tion of Rio Soccer. There traditional powerhouses - Flamengo, Fluminense, and Botafogo formed a renegade league last week to gain credibility.

rounded by a small garden.

JD 6,000 p.a.

European soccer roundup

European Soccer legends face jeers and humiliation

PARIS (AFP) - Footballing legends AC Milan and Real Madrid were the butt of renewed jeers and insults at the

in Italy, AC Milan were again hopelessly out of touch as they were held to a goalless home draw by bottom-of-thetable Lecce inside a rain-drenched San Siro Stadium.

And in Spain former champions Real Madrid were humiliated 5-0 by bitter rivals

AC Milan's latest slip, just a few days after an identical result against Udinese, left them just two points clear of Sampdoria who turned on a magical display to cruch Napoli 4-1 in a match in which both sides missed penalties.

Roberto Mancini put the issue beyond doubt when he found the Napoli net twice in the last five minutes. Lombardio opened the scoring in the 34th minutes and Ruud Gulit notched up his 11th goal of the season five minutes into the second-half.

England captain David Platt could have made it even worse for the visitors but his penalty was saved by Giuseppe Taglialatela. Meanwhile at the other end Gianluca Pagliuca also pulled off a spectacular save to stop Daniel Fonseca's

In fact a 1960 league record was equalled when two other penalties were also saved. Udinese's Graziano Banistini denied Parma's Thomas Brolin and Poicenza's Massimo Taibi stopped an effort from Torino's Andrea Silenzi.

Milan's traditional rivals Juventus could have moved to within one point of the leaders. But they were held I-I at Cremonese. Roberto Baggio put Juventus ahead with his 11th league goal of the campaign. but Cremonese equalised just before half time through Marco Giandebiagi.

To round off a great day for the Serie A's strugglers, Udinese beat Parma J-0 and Reggiana beat Inter Milan by the same scoreline.

England international Paul Gascoign played superbly. although he had to wear a specially-made bandage for A fractured rib. But his performance did not prevent his Lazio side crashing 4-1 at Foggia.

Barcelona's dramatic demolition of Real Madrid in front of 115,000 delirious fans inside Nou Camp was spearheaded by Romario. The Brazilian forward, who has responded well after an eye operation, recaptured his popularity with the home crowd by scoring a hat-trick.

Real Madrid had no unswers to the slick-moving Barcelona side. And there is little doubt that in their glory days Real's coach Benito Floro v ould have been sacked on the spot, but? with the clob ",ffers empty"there is little sign of anything of so drastic hupponing

The other Bares came from Dutch in creation. Ronald Kooma, and ivea-

Barcolona stand designer. behind Deportion Coruna with scored three goals in a fiveminute blitz each side of hatftime to beat visiting Logrones 🗒

Sporting Gijon were beaten 3-0 at Real Žawragoza aiter having Luis Sierra and Juanet- . sent off in the first half and hour. Athletic Bilbuo were held 0-0 in the Busque derby against Real Sociedad but moved up into third place above Gijon on goal ditier-

Both teams have 22 points. there behind Barcelona, who are two behind Deportivo.

Sevilla gave away a two goal lead to end with a 3-2 draw ugainst Albacete and Atletico Madrid were held (40 by bottom of the tale Lerisia

In Portugal Sporting missed a golden opportunity of closing the gap on rivals Benfice as intop of the Portuguese fire of sion this weethend when t were held to a surprise to

draw at struggling Fumaticalo. Benefica fought a goalless draw at home against Git Vicente to retain a three-point

Tusted to Police hope to identify this have Kerrigan's attacker

ose la tors hope to get a better look at wspaper the man who attacked figure mespe skater Nancy Kerrigan by In the sending a videotape of him to a d Shra laboratory.

"If we get a clear picture of the person, that would definitely be a step in the right direction," deputy police chief Benny Napoleon said.

The videotape was taken ban or Thursday by a cameraman for for gor Intersport, a Chicago-based production company, seconds before the attack and shows aid the the aftacker squatting near the curtain when Kerrigan pulls, it open as she walked off the skating rink, Napoleon said. see his face. Napoleon said. "You can see his eyes. You can see his nose.

You can see his mouth." Grace and Wild Studios Inc. in Farmington Hills, a private laboratory, will attempt to clarify the shot through digital enhancement, Napoleon said. He said he was unsure how long that will take.

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He said police would wait until then to distribute the videotape of the man.

On Sunday, a videotape technician from Olympia Arenas, which operates Joe Louis Arena, determined that the (AFF) attacker was white, Napoleon sonated said. On Saturday, police revolus leased two composite drawings for is of the man because four wits disor nesses described him as white er in and two described him as

WITH OMAR SHARE & TANNAH HERSCH

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ing lead: King of 🗘 Bridge columns usually feature hands where game or alam contracts

are reached. However, sometimes

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tracts such as this.

The suction was unremarkable.

With the points split evenly, it was obviously going to be touch and go which side would prevail, but the

oms of rare beauty are found in

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A KNAVISH TRICK

Olympic team Saturday, two days after she suffered a severely brusied knee when she was struck with a blunt weapon at Cobo Arena following a practice session. It forced her to withdraw from the U.S.

Championships. The U.S. Figure Skating Association's International Committee named Kerrigan and Tonya Harding to the Olympic team after Harding skated to her second national championship.

Kerrigan has been told by doctors that she can return to skating next week and begin jumping in two weeks. The women's Olympic competition is scheduled for the last weekend in February.

Kerrigan said she began physical therapy Friday.

"The swelling has gone down a lot." Kerrigan said. "It's not going to take so much to get back because I was in the best shape of my life. Even with a couple of weeks off, I can get back easily, I hope."
Witnesses describe the

attacker as being 35 to 40 years old, 6 foot tall (1.8 metres) and 190 (86 kilos) to 210 pounds (95 kilos). Napoleon said. Another Intersport

videotape shows the attacker running down a hall after he had hit Kerrigan, Napoleon

"You can see him running down a hall, he said. "You can see what looks like a black

pendulum appeared to swing to de-clarer when West selected the king of diamonds for the opening lead.

Declarer won in hand with the ace

and immediately returned the four toward dummy's nine. Sitting West was veteran French internationalist Claude Delmouly. He won with the knave and found the only return to

knave and found the only return to defeat the contract. Can you do the same, looking at all the hands?

Delmouly shifted to the jack of spades! Had he led a low spade, declarer would have come to three tricks in the suit by simply playing the same to the sam

for split honors. The jack, however, sealed declarer's fate. Whether South won in hand or on the board,

the defenders were essured of two

With careful play, the defense had to prevail. Declarer had only six tricks available—three diamonds, two spades and a club. Before a several spades.

enth could be established in either clubs or hearts, the defenders would

come to two spades, two hearts, two

best defense at the European Com-

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tricks in the suit.

diamonds and a club.

munity Championship.

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Man. United play Norwich in F.A. Cup

LONDON (Agencies) - Manchester United's hopes of completing an English league and cup double were made much tougher Sunday when they were drawn away to Norwich in the top tie of the fourth-round of the F.A. Cup.

Third-round giantkillers Kidderminster Harriers, who beat Birmingham City, and Stockport County, who knocked out Premier League Queen's Park Rangers, were both handed home nes.

Non-league Kidderminster play third division Preston while second division Stockagainst Liverpool if the Merseyside Giants can beat Bristol City in a re-match of their abandoned third-round

Stockport last reached round four in 1965 when their opponents were Liverpool. They drew 1-1, with Liverpool winning the replay 2-0 and going on to beat Leeds in the final.

Holders Arsenal, who visit Millwall for their third-round tie, were drawn away to the winners of the Bolton-Everton third-round replay.

The only other non-league side, Bath City, will travel to Premier League strugglers Oldham if they beat first divi-

sion Stoke in their replay. Norwich, who lost their manager Mike Walker this week to Everton, we'comed the tie against the league lead-

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ers and cup favourites. Captain Ian Butterworth said: "This is the tie of the round, we will be facing the best ream in England and there will be a great atmosphere. Everyone will be bubbling for that one."

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Nabil and Hisham Theatre presents

Ahlan Arab Summit Conference (play)

daily at 3:30 p.m. Theatre is closed Mondays and Tuesdays AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian government has granted formal recognition to the Envangelical Local Church in Amman and Jordan, according to parish Pastor Nu man Smeir. He told the Jordan Times Monday that the government sent representatives to attend the inauguration of the new church, in western Amman, held at the weekend under the auspices of L shop Naim Khouri. He said visitors and guests from the occupied territories and Jordan attended the cere-

Arab funds discuss aid for Palestinians

ABU DHABI (AP) — Directors of Arab funds met Monday to coordinate financial support for the Gaza Strip and Jericho. Arab states and the oil Gulf states in particular are expected to play a major role in rebuilding the badly damaged infrastruc-ture and economy in the self-rule areas laid out in the Israeli-Palestinian peace accord. The three-day meeting will discuss cooperation among these funds over contribution to the \$2 billion world aid package agreed upon by the international community following the conclusion of the pact Sept. 13. The meeting, presided by Khalifa Al Meheiri, director general of the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development. comprises representatives of the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, the Arab Monetary Fund, the Arab Bank for Development in Africa, OPEC fund, the Islamic Development Fund and national funds of the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman and Qatar.

Mother pleads for news of her lost son

JENIN, occupied West Bank (AFP) - A Palestinian mother has appealed for news of her son and nephew missing in action (MiA) during the 1967 Middle East war, as a U.S. congressional team tours the region investigating the fate of six Israeli MiAs. "They were both soldiers in the Jordanian army. They were captured by the Israeli army and then disappeared, Communist deputy Hashem Mahmeed wrote in a letter to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. The mother, Saada Ibrahim Al Haja, from the occupied West Bank town of Jericho, long believed her son Hazmi and nephew Hafez were in Atlit jail in northern Israel. The prison service told her they were in Jordan, but Palestinians then told her they were in Atlit. Mahmeed told AFP on Monday that hope had returned after a friend of the family thought he heard a message from Hazmi to the family read out in a request programme in Arabic on Israel Radio. "She then came to me to try to find him and the military authorities have promised a reply in a month," Mr. Mahmeed said. "Dozens of Palestinians have no news of their relatives who disappeared in the 1967 war," he said.

Turkey-trag pipeline talks 'inconclusive'

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkey and Iraq held talks on the removal of oil from pipelines linking the two states that have been blocked since the Gulf crisis but without any early agreement, a Turkish diplomat said Monday. The discussions here Sunday focused on the possible removal of some eight to nine million barrels of crude oil owned by both Iraq and Turkey but stuck in the Turkish section of the two pipelines. "It was a meeting to raise the issue. Now we must wait for the Iraqi authorities' viewpoint," said the diplomat. He said there was no early agreement.

Russia says it arrested 20 spies in 1993

MOSCOW (AP) - The former KGB arrested 20 people for espionage in 1993 and foiled several attempts by foreign spies to recruit top officials around President Boris Yeltsin, Russian intelligence agents claimed Monday. Among those arrested were five spies from Georgia and one from Estonia, despite treaties among the former Soviet republics promising not to engage in espionage against each other, said Sergei Stepashin. first deputy director of Russia's new federal counter-intelli-

Sudan rebels say rivals poised to attack

NAIROBI (AFP) — A Sudanese rebel leader Monday accused a rival insurgent group of preparing to attack his forces despite a ceasefire agreement between the two factions. Riek Machar, leader of a breakaway group of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), said the government was also massing troops for a new offensive against the southern rebels. Fighting reportedly erupted between rebels and government forces near the Ugandan border last week, but details were unclear. Mr. Riek told AFP that John Garang, chief of the mainstream SPLA faction, was preparing an attack despite a new agreement between the rival rebel factions to conduct joint negotiations with Khartoum.

Palestine and Israel in sports first

TOKYO (AFP) - Palestine and Israel clashed head-on in sports for the first time when Mohammad Al Turk played Yaniv Sharon in amen's singles match at the Global Youth Table Tennis championships here Monday. "I don't mind that I lost, because it was a match for peace and sports," Turk said after losing 4-11, 8-11, 7-11, 6-11 in the preliminary round. Palestine were invited by International Table Tennis Federation President Ichiro Ogimura following the signing of the peace accord by the Palestine Liberation Organisation and Israel four months ago.

3 Algerian parties agree on joint platform

ALGIERS (AFP) - Three of Algeria's main political parties have drawn up a joint political platform in the run-up to national conference in this guerrilla war-torn country later this month, officials said Monday. The formerly sole ruling National Liberation Front (FLN), the Movement for Democracy in Algeria led by ex-President Ahmad Ben Bella, and Sheikh Abdullah Djaballah's Islamic Renaissance Movement (Mri Al Nahda) reached agreement on Sunday. They have submitted their programme to the collegiate presidency, the High State Committee and the government-appointed national dialogue commission, in preparation for the conference on

Syriac Christian priest seized in Turkey

ANKARA (R) - A Syriac Christian priest has been kidnapped from a minibus in southeastern Turkey, where a Kurdish revolt is raging, a church official said Monday. "Priest Melki Tok was kidnapped on Sunday by two gunmen in a car who followed the passenger minibus he was travelling on." said the official, who asked not to be named. Mr. Tok, in his sixties, had conducted Sunday convices at the Syriac Orthodox village of Ogunduk and was going to Haberli village to officiate at a wedding when he was seized. The villages are in Sirnak province, a frequent flashpoint in the fighting between government troops and separatist guerrillas of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK).

Kahane followers beat American journalist

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) - Militant Jewish settlers on Monday beat up an American journalist who they thought sullied the reputation of assassinated Rabbi Meir Kahane. Robert Friedman, a freelancer whose work appeared frequently in the Village Voice, was leaving the Tapuah settlement in the northern West Bank when five armed residents jumped him and started hitting him and kicking him, he said. "One guy was built like a truck, but the others were wimps and fought like girls," Mr. Friedman said, calling the attack inept. "We defended ourselves and got out of there." Mr. Friedman was with Mitch Pilcer, a journalist with the Jerusalem Post.

Ancient statue head unearthed

AMMAN (J.T.) - An eightmonth-old excavation prog-ramme going on at the Nymphaeum near the old market place in downtown Amman has resulted in the unearthing of a second large head of a statue that used to decorate the Roman site more than 2,000 years ago, Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Mohammad Adwan has announced. During a tour of the excava-

tion site accompanied by Dr. Safwan Tell, director-general of the department of antiquities and Amman Mayor Mamdouh Al Abbadi, Dr. Adwan thanked the municipality for its cooperation with the Department of Antiquities.

Dr. Tell told the Jordan Times that the head of the new-found statue dates back to second century A.D. and was the second in two months to be unearthed at the same site.

"We are still looking for other heads and the rest of the statues which used to decorate the Nymphaeum areas at the time of the Romans. Each of the heads is believed to be of



statues at least three metres high," Dr. Tell said.

According to Dr. Tell, the digs conducted so far by the department teams resulted in the discovery of most of the

ancient site and the unearthing of columns and living quarters which had been built on the remains of the old Nymphaeum during the Byzantine Umayyad, Abbasid and Mam-

No plan yet for regional economic talks in Amman

By P.V. Vivekanand Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN - No plans have been finalised for Amman to host a regional conference on economic cooperation grouping Arabs and non-Arabs as well as Israel, and the fate of the proposal for such a forum depends on the course of Arab-Israeli peace negotiations, an informed official source said Monday.

The source also said Jordan would not consider any Israeli overtures in the context of the Kingdom's territory before the Jewish state unconditionally withdraws from occupied Jordanian "We want our land back.

and that is our priority," said the source, referring to nearly 550 square kilometres of Jordanian territory now under Israeli occupation.

Commenting on a report in the Israeli newspaper Haartez that the Jewish state was proposing to lease part of the Jordanian teritory as part of a peace agreement, the source said: "It is their idea, not

ours." He did not elaborate. The source, who preferred anonymity, said reports that Amman would be hosting a regional economic conference in April were too prem-

"Yes, the idea has been discussed, but it is too early to talk about it because the whole thing depends on political negotiations." said the We have not even reached the stage of discussing a date.

The source was commentingson remarks attributed to Israeli Foreign Minister Shi-, mon Peres that such a conference would be held in Amman in April and that Israel

CHTAURA, Lebanon (AP)

- A U.S. congresional team

trying to determine the fate of

six missing Israeli servicemen

travelled Monday under heavy

security fo east Lebanon, the

third leg of thier humanitarian

The three-man delegation

headed by Michael van Dusen.

chief of staff of the House of

Representatives Foreign

Affairs Committee, was driven

in a four-car motorcade from

Damascus to the Lebanese

border checkpoint at Masnaa

At the border crossing, ab-

out 100 heavily armed

Lebanese troops in 20 military

vehicles joined the motorcade,

which drove into the Syrian-

A Lebanese security source.

speaking on condition of

anonymity, told reporters the

staff team headed for the vil-

Three of the Israelis went

missing in a tank battle with

the Syrian army in Sultan Ya-

goub on June 11, 1982, five

days after Israesl invaded

The Lebanese army had sta-

tioned two M-113 armoured

personnel carrier and six jeeps

in the village, about 15

controlled Bekaa Valley.

lage of Sultan Yaqoub.

Lebanon.

at 10.30 a.m (0630 GMT).

will be attending. The source confirmed that Israel had brought up the proposal in the course of peace negotiations and that it talked about "3,000" to 4,000

people attending it."

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher told reporters in Amman following talks with His Majesty King Hussein on Dec. 6 that among the topics he discussed with the King was also an idea for such a conference under the auspices of the joint Jordanian-American-Israeli economic working group set up during His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan's visit to

Washington in October. According to Mr. Christopher, the trilateral committee "is something that we all depend upon in the future to provide an economic spark for this region.'

"We discussed a number of options such as the possible calling of conferences in the trade and investment area." he said.

However, he explained, "it is an idea that is simply in the process of exploration. There were no particular figures used about such a conference.

The Jerusalem Post quoted Mr. Peres as telling the executive bureau of the Israeli Histrachut labour federation on Thursday that the conference was intended to encourage investments in the region after a peace settlement has been reached.

Mr. Peres was quoted in the report as saying the gathering would deal with, among other things, setting up a "peace valley" along the 'Syrian-African" rift running from the Syrian-Israeli bor-

kilometres from Masnaa, to

guard the visiting Americans.

The team was later expected

A Shi'ite Muslim faction

holding two Israeli soldiers has

refused to meet with the

Americans, charging the U.S.

'We have previously de-

clared our position that the

United States is not qualified

to play such a humanitarian

role because it is a close part-

ner with Israel in its continued

aggression against Lebanon,

said Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah,

leader of the Iranian-backed

Sheikh Nasrallah spoke in

Damascus Sunday after a

three-hour meeting with Vice-

President Abdul Halim Khad-

dam of Syria, the main power

However, there has not been

any open denial by Hizbollah

that Syrian mediators were

working as middlemen be-

Last month, Syrian Presi-

dent Hafez Al Assad promised

U.S. Secretary of State Warren

Christopher when he visited

Damascus to extend help to

the U.S. team to establish the

fate of the missing Israelis.

broker in Lebanon.

tween the two sides .

Hizbollah.

was biased towards Israel.

to drive to Beirut for talks with

Lebanese officials.

U.S. team visits Lebanon

to probe fate of Israelis

der in the north to Eilat on the Red Sea in the south, a "joint Jordanian-Israeli international airport," and building a highway between Egypt and Jordan via Eilat.

Jordanian officials have confirmed that these projects were discussed as ideas during meetings of the multilateral working group on regional economic cooperation. but that Jordan insisted that these could be tackled only after the basic issues of conflict - territory, water and refugees - were satisfactorily addressed.

According to the Post, the conference would be organised by the U.S. Council of Foreign Affairs and the Swiss Davos company.

The concerned government, Mr. Peres was quoted as saying, would provide the guarantees while the private sector would provide the projects and that President Bill Clinton "warmly recommended the holding of the conference."

The Post reported that a joint committees formed by the Israeli finance and foreign ministries is already "planning the projects Israel is to present at the conference, including power plans, pipe laying, roads, ports and others.

Jordan has said that while it was willing to consider joint projects considered vital to advancing the peace process, overall economic cooperation on a wider scale could come only after a comprehensive peace settlement has been reached.

Jordan also opposes any consideration of lifting of the Arab economic boycott of Israel before a settlement is worked out.

Yemen welcomes Sabah visit

KUWAIT (Agencies) — Yemeni Foreign Minister Mohammad Salem Bassindawh welcomed in remarks published Monday a proposed visit to Sanaa by his Kuwaiti counterpart, saying he hoped it would end a three-year-old strain in relations,

Mr. Bassindawh told the Kuwait daily Al Siyassah in a telephone interview that Yemen welcomed the visit "because we are really looking forward to a new era in our relations with close cooperation prevailing. The Kuwaiti minister.

Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah, said in recent statements that Yemen was on the list of countries he planned to visit, but that political turmoil in that country had forced a

Sheikh Sahah, in June listed six conditions for normalising

The Kuwaiti terms included condemning the Iraqi invasion. helping to free Kuwaitis beheved to be still held in Iraq. calling on Baghdad to abide by all Gulf war-related U.N. resolutions and to recognise a new U.N.-demarcated horder between Kuwait and Iraq.

Majali blames media for continued strain in Jordan-Gulf ties

By Nermeen Murad Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Monday blamed the Jordanian media for continued strains in relations between the Kingdom and Gulf states as well as what he described as "wrestling" between the government and Parliament.

"Unfortunately, and I say it clearly, the Jordan media play a part in not getting this relations back (with Gulf states)," Dr. Majali told reporters in response to a question about Arab-Arab rela-

"Everytime we almost get it back, a couple of articles go in some of the media and it becomes strained again," Dr. Majali said.

In response to another question about whether the government will work to upgrade and facilitate the institutions of democracy such as Parliament, Dr. Majali said that the media was also a reason behind the tension between his Cabinet and Parliament in an obvious reference to the gruelling confidence session in December.

"The tension was drawn by the media," the prime minister said, adding that an article appeared which caused tension that had not existed until its publication. The prime minister was most probably referring to comments ahead of the confidence session that described the newly elected deputies as "docile."

Asked why his government had a "tug of war over freedom of expression" with the Jordanian media in general, Dr. Majali said that this was not true and that he did not think there was tension between the two. But he added that "sometimes" the media "takes a little thing and they don't study it properly and then blow it" out of all prop-

The prime minister explained that while the King-dom's relations with Gulf states, and especially Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, were improving, they continued to

face setbacks because of critical opinion pieces or reports in the press He said his government

had received communiques from Gulf states protesting the criticism in the Jordanian media and are unconvinced that the government is not behind the reports. "A couple of articles come

up, the second day we get into trouble over them - the second day, it does not even go to the third," the premier added. "They think that we have control over the media. that we tell you what to write and what not to write. And you know this is not true." the premier said.

We hope that the media would take this concern into account, do they want this relation to be back, then they could help it return rather than to stir things against it."

He said that while the Kingdom was gratified by the success of its goodwill overtures with the United Arab Emirates and Qatar he hoped that the same will happen with Saudi Arabia. "We hope our relations

with Saudi Arabia would improve," Dr. Majali said, adding that contacts between the two countries "are good now but have not reached the level we want."

"We are trying to ask the media to please stop adding oil to the fire." Dr. Majali said, adding that "nothing is going to change if we keep criticising them. But the situation will change if we meet them and talk to them."

Dr. Majali also criticised the United States and other Western countries for failing to facilitate reconciliation between Jordan and the Gulf Arab states. "Western countries, in-

cluding the United States, have not been doing enough to mend Jordan's relations with other Arabs," Dr. Majali said.

"We know that Egypt is trying its best." he said. "But the West is not, and I do not of a bad feeling about what has taken place during the

Two held for contempt of State Security Court

AMMAN (AP) — Two men were arrested Monday after going on a rampage accusing the State Security Court of bias in the trial of 10 men suspected of attempting to assassinate the

The two men, identified as cited for contempt of court - a charge that normally carried a six-month prison term. The two men, relatives of

one of the defendants standing trial in the sedition case, were not sentenced by the threeman tribunal, headed by Colonel Hafez Amin, because the military court has no jurisdiction over civil cases. The Shdeifat's interrupted

the court proceedings by shouting at Col. Amir and accusing him of "bias" and 'injustice." They walked out of the cour-

troom and smashed windows at ' the entrance of the building. They were joined by at least another 20 men and engaged in a brief fist fight with police. It was not immediately clear whether the other men were arrested. The episode occurred as the

court heard a state witness deny allegations by defendants in the sedition plot case that their confessions were extracted under torture. The state witness, a prosecu-

tion clerk, told the tribunal. 'no coercion was used during prosecution interrogation. which was only attended by me, the prosecutor and the

The defendants have alleged that security officers were present when they gave their confessions to Prosecutor Muhannad Hijazi, an army major. They also told the court that

they were subject to severe physical and psychological duress during interrogation by security officers. The statements, obtained

during three months of detention at the General Intelligence Department, is the pillar of the prosecution's case. But the defendants retracted

their earlier confessions in court and entered innocent pleas at the outset of the trial, which began Sept. 9. Under standing orders of the

court, the defendants and witnesses could not be identified by name in media reports. Two of the accused are being tried in absentia. Five military cadets, a mem-

ber of a Royal Guard unit and four others, including the two fugitives, are charged with plotting to assassinate the Monarch to pave the way for a takeover of power by the illeg-al Hezb Al Tahrir group. Hezh Al Tahrir, a puritan

group established in the early 1950s, does not recognise any of the existing Arab govern-ments and calls for the establishment of an Islamic Monday's four-hour session

was adjourned until Sunday, when the court will issue its verdict.

Jordan backs independent Palestine

(Continued from page 1)

breakthrough in Syrian-Israeli negotiations could reflect positively on the Jordanian, Palestinian and Lebanese talks with Israel if only by "raising the tempo of negotiations."

The prime minister said that one of the positive results of positive progress in the Middle East talks could be tapped at a scheduled Washington meeting between His Majesty King Hussein and President Clinton in the last third of this month. The King left Jordan for a

short private visit to Britain

Sunday before he heads for the U.S. where he will undergo routine medical checkups and later meet President Clinton.

The meeting, which will take place after the Syrian-American summit in Geneva, will centre on the progress of the peace talks and bilateral issues. Dr. Majali said.

Asked what results Jordan expected from the King's meeting with Mr. Clinton, he said that the Kingdom hoped for "continuous support of the (Jordanian) economy and defence forces as well as debt reduction."

Clinton takes pre-dawn jog in Brussels

BRUSSELS (AFP) — U.S. President Bill Clinton was up at 0500 GMT here Monday in prepare for a NATO summit with a pre-dawn jog of about four kilometres in a local park. suit and surrounded by half-a. Whitehness dozen security months dozen security guards. He jog all Highliess ged twice around the lake hassan Tuesday is Bois De I ged twice around the lake in history and discussed run which took a little lace it. Bois De La Cambre Park—a strom which took a little less than half an hour. Mr. Clinton waved a cheery good morning to reporters, but had nothing more to say ahead of a gruelling day that was due to start with a meeting between the president and Manfred Woerner. German Woerner, German secretary general of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) On the heels of that meeting was a two-summit of the 16nation alliance, which was focused on increasing security links with Eastern Europe but falling short of extending any NATO security guarantee to countries of the region.

Argentine town rocked by suicides

BUENOS AIRES (AFP) — A quiet town in central Argentina has been rocked by the suicides of six teenagers in the past three months, Buenos Aires newspapers have reported. The tragedy has un-folded in Villa Gobernador Galvez, a once-thriving industrial centre that has failen on hard times, with 30 per cent unemployment and 30 per cent of the population living below the poverty line. In four of the cases, youths shot themselves with guns they found at home. The latest one occurred Fri-day, when a 15-year-old boy took his own life. That same day a 14-year-old girl shot herself but lived. Police sought to play down speculation that a Satanic cult might be behind the suicides, saying there was no such group in the town. And social workers said the six vouths who killed themselves did not come from particularly poor families, blaming the suicides instead on communications problems between them and their parents.

4 officers injured in mosque brawl

NEW YORK (AP) - Four police officers responding to a report of a robbery at a mosque were injured in a brawl with worshipers. One officer's gun was taken during the scuffle, and another officer's radio was grabbed, said officer Merri Pearsall, a police spokeswoman. Both items were recovered by police, she said. No arrests were immediately made. Officer Pearsall said four officers responded to the robbery report at Muhammad's Mosque around 4 p.m. "They entered the mosque, a scuffle takes place just inside the entrance, she said. They were confronted by a large group. which really didn't want them in there." One of the officers was pushed down a flight of stairs and suffered back and neck injuries. Officer Pearsall said. She was taken to New York Hospital and was in stable condition. Another officer suffered a possible. broken nose, a third had a back injury and the fourth officer's injuries were not immediately known. They also were taken to New York hos-

Cancer boy still receives 10,000 letters a day

LONDON (R) - A British boy who entered the record books after receiving 16 mil-lion get-well cards when suffering from cancer, still receives 10.000 messages of support a day even though he overcame the disease several years ago. The Sunday Telegraph reported that the front garden of Craig Shergold's house was covered in mail bags every day. waiting for his parents to sort through the flood of letters. Such is the weight of mail that Craig. 14, has been allocated an official post code, which is normally given to large towns or countries. Craig, who had a brain tumour removed when he was nine, became a minor celebrity in Britain in the late 1980s after he set himself the goal of receiving the most letters in history.

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